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New Statesman

THE REAGAN SHOW (rpt)

PLUS: GCHQ ● Working men's clubs ● Berthold Brecht

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New Statesman

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LONDON AGAINST RACISM

1984 sees the start of a major drive by the GLC to make people aware of the damaging and divisive effects of racism in London.

The facts of racial disadvantage ought to be well known, but too often people choose to ignore or condone them – especially the way larger organisations perpetuate racism in their structures and practices.

To be effective, the London Against Racism campaign needs your support.

How? Partly by taking part in the programme of anti-racist activities and events in 1984, but most importantly by a personal commitment to the campaign – by becoming involved.

To fight racism in London, this is what we are asking you to do:

1. Recognise that racism runs through all aspects of life in London; not ignore it, condone it, or gloss over it.
2. Agree the fundamental right of all Londoners to enjoy a level of *real* equality, justice, freedom and security that currently does not exist.
3. Create conditions, at home, at work and in the community that make it impossible for racism to operate.
4. Join with all ordinary people in London to fight the disadvantages common to them all.
5. Examine, criticise, challenge and change the structures that perpetuate racism in organisations. Don't sit back and leave it to others. *Your* contribution is vital.

Write to: Ethnic Minorities Unit, Room 686, County Hall, London, SE1 617

I want to join the fight against racism in London.
How can I become involved?

NAME

ADDRESS

DAYTIME TEL. NO. NST

LONDON AGAINST RACISM
keep GLC Working for London

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. . . NEW STATESMAN IN THE FOREFRONT OF THE DEBATE

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New Statesman Vol 107 No 2759 3 February 1984

Two-time Ronald?

NOTHING except ill-health – his own or Nancy's – was ever going to stop President Reagan from trying for a second term. Even so, the old ham managed to extract the maximum of theatre from the run up to the big moment on Sunday. There is a long way still for him to go before the election in November – and he is certainly not a shoe-in.

His political success is an extraordinary phenomenon. He evidently has little grasp of the essentials of either domestic or foreign policy. It is openly admitted that he only works two or three hours a day. The record of his Administration is a scroll of failure at home and abroad. The taint of corruption has touched scores of his appointees. Economically, politically and militarily his Administration has failed to exercise the traditional American leadership of the non-Communist world. And yet there he is, the unchallenged candidate of his party, preparing for his second campaign – with less attention being paid now to the fact that he is 72 than was paid in 1980 to the fact that he was 68.

There are strong parallels between Reagan's capacity to keep out in front politically, despite the fact that almost none of the rhetoric is translated into positive achievement, and Mrs Thatcher's. Their appeal to their respective electorates has mainly to do with their capacity to evoke some past 'golden age'. Mrs Thatcher's mythology centres on Victorian values and ignores the fact that the condition of the United Kingdom at the end of the reign of Queen Victoria was so bad that it led to the rise of the Labour Party and the introduction of the embryo welfare state by Liberal governments.

Reagan's golden age is equally mythical. It is of the United States as the land of the free and the home of the brave, where anyone with enterprise and energy can get rich. By sticking carefully to well-rehearsed deliveries of this theme to camera (read from auto-cue), the President has made himself into a modern personification of this myth.

It may be enough to get him his second term. It is no basis for running a government in the second half of the twentieth century. President Reagan has hugely accelerated the process of uncoupling Europe from the United States, for his crude view of the world and of great power politics has finally convinced even right-wing politicians like Mrs Thatcher that American and European interests are not the same. A second Reagan term would make even more urgent the need for the Socialist parties of Europe to develop foreign and defence policies based on European priorities and concerns.

567 per cent inflation

ONCE UPON A TIME it was possible to say that two prices had stayed the same for half a century – the price of a platform ticket and the cost of a lost deposit in a Parliamentary election. The penny platform ticket went years ago. Now Mr Leon Brittan wants to put the deposit up by 567 per cent.

His arguments for doing so, published in a White Paper on Tuesday, are very feeble. He even tries to present his case as if he is being restrained. If the rate of inflation since 1918 (when the £150 deposit system was first introduced) was fully allowed for, he says, the deposit should be put up to £2,000. So only £1,000 is very reasonable.

That line of reasoning is a complete *non sequitur*. For why should the level of a Parliamentary deposit be index linked like a granny bond? Indeed, the fact that Parliament left the figure at £150 for so long is itself evidence that it was not thought of as a figure that should regularly be raised. When it was introduced, national politics – apart from the rapidly growing Labour Party – were still an overwhelmingly elitist activity. A deposit set in 1918 at today's equivalent of £2,000 was a good indication of the way in which the then political establishment intentionally kept a high fence round the process of elections to Westminster. The gradual erosion of the real cost of a deposit was (and was intended to be) a reflection of a hope that politics should become more accessible to more ordinary individuals.

The intervening years saw the development of the strong two party (or at best a two and a half party) system. The changes in the rules that Mr Brittan is proposing reflect the determination of the national parties in control to fix the system so that they continue to benefit from it. This shines clearly out of the White Paper.

Thus the fact that the number of candidates not belonging to a major political party rose from 94 at the 1966 general election to 474 in 1983 is stated without argument to be proof that the deposit needs to be increased. So is the fact that such 'fringe' candidates get the right of free postage to distribute one piece of election material. Worst of all, it seems, the existence of fringe candidates upsets the cosy non-statutory arrangements with the broadcasting authorities for carving up available air time between the two and a half main parties.

Mr Brittan's proposals in any case go against the current trend of British politics – which is against the two party system that dominated for the three decades after the war. It is no valid objection to claim that fringe party electoral material may be 'inflamatory'. It is all covered by legislation to protect the peace and to prevent incitement to racial hatred. In practice, given the increasing fragmentation of British politics, to exclude so-called fringe candidates from the main electoral process – for that is the clear intention and would be the clear result of introducing a £1,000 deposit – would simply have the effect of increasing the already substantial alienation of the electorate from politics.

There is a perfectly effective way of filtering out genuinely 'loony' candidates – which the White Paper simply dismisses on the grounds of administrative difficulty. It is that the number of signatures of persons on any given electorate register required to validate a candidacy should be raised from the present ten to some more substantial figure, say, 100. The ability to show a certain minimum level of local support should be the test of whether someone can stand for Parliament, not the ability to raise £1,000. □

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Racial codes for the unemployed

Which group does the claimant best fit into?
(Use the claimant's appearance to select the group. If in doubt, eg becaus
choose the group which most nearly fits him).

1 **Africans/West Indians** (exclude those of Asian appearance)

2 **Asians** (include anyone of Asian appearance)

3 **Europeans, Chinese, Arabs** and all others not in groups 1 and 2

If the claimant does not want to be recorded in any group — Refus

THE DEPARTMENT of Employment has admitted that it has prepared forms for monitoring the racial origin of unemployment benefit applicants. And although the department is at pains to point out that it has no plans to introduce ethnic monitoring at present, it is unable to explain why it has printed form 'RE 1' which provides for the gathering and computer coding of racial origins.

The form, which appears to be designed to be stored in a claimant's file, suggests that officers should use the claimant's appearance to select the group. If there is doubt, officers are directed to use 'the group which most nearly fits him' (sic).

Form RE 1, which was printed some time ago, allows only three racial codes and offers only minimal directions:

1 Africans/West Indians (excluding those of Asian appearance)
2 Asians (include anyone of Asian appearance)
3 Europeans, Chinese, Arabs and all those not in groups 1 & 2.

It also offers a code for those claimants who refuse to be coded, but it makes no suggestion that claimants will be told that they are to be categorised.

Although the form is clearly designed to be stored on computer, the Department of Employment was unable to explain why the form directed that no data entry was necessary for category 3 – Europeans, Chinese, Arabs.

The Commission for Racial Equality supports the concept of monitoring the racial origin of those claiming unemployment and other benefits as necessary evidence of discrimination. But it condemned the categories offered as 'a nonsense'. It has drawn up a code of practice for racial monitoring, and believes that at least six separate categories are required for effective monitoring, at least one of which should be open for the applicant's own choice. It also maintains that it is vital that monitoring should be by self-identification.

A spokesperson for the Commission was also concerned about confidentiality. The CRE argues that only aggregate totals need be kept and that the racial origin of particular applicants should not be recorded or stored with their names.

Frank Field MP, Labour's spokesman on social security, said that the party supported the concept of ethnic monitoring. But he condemned this particular form and said that he would raise the matter in Parliament.

Deborah Pugh and Mark Nicholls

'Mediaeval' belts in British prisons

DESPITE unofficial attempts by the Home Office to prevent their use, inmates in Britain's prisons are continuing to be restrained by metal body belts which the Prison Reform Trust describes as 'medieval' mechanical methods.

Revelations about the 'body belt', which in the views of most experts contravenes both the European and the United Nations conventions on the treatment of prisoners, came to light during an investigation into the export of 'leg irons and other restraining equipment' by the Crown Agents.

The belt, which is designed to severely restrict all arm movements, is manufactured by Hiatt and Co, a division of the investment company London and Liverpool Trust. Hiatt have been in business making a range of innocuous products like pet combs, bull rings and agricultural implements and a number of rather less innocuous items such as leg irons, shackles and gang chains. These latter products became the subject of an investigation by the 'Watchdog' team from BBC TV's *Sixty Minutes*.

Leg shackles are for the export trade. In September last year, the Bahamian prison department sent an enquiry to the Crown Agents who passed it on to Hiatt. The order, according to Hiatt's sales manager, David Hart, was for a 12-foot gang chain with leg cuffs for six prisoners; the price, £55. But the order was never delivered because the Bahamians decided they preferred six individual leg irons.

Subsequently the matter came to be of some embarrassment to the government after Mrs Thatcher had replied to questions from Amnesty International about the Crown Agents' role. The Prime Minister told Amnesty that 'the Crown Agents declined to handle the order for the Bahamas,' and added, 'it is many years since the Crown Agents handled the procurement of leg irons'.

But both Hiatt and the Bahamian prisons department confirmed that the order had been received by the Crown Agents and had been passed on to Hiatt. The readiness of the Crown Agents to handle goods they knew to be sensitive was revealed in the *New Statesman* in March 1983.

Hiatt further revealed that it had been supplying among others the Home Office with their body belt. The company said it had sold them a steel body belt with padlocks and handcuffs on each side. But the Home Office denies it has purchased or used any kind of metal belt, admitting only that it uses leather ones that are actually made inside prisons. But Hiatt's David Hart has said that one Home Office staff official had returned a metal belt to them after a prisoner had succeeded in rubbing through the chains securing the handcuffs.

Ex-prisoners Jimmy Boyle and Ben Conroy have claimed to have been held in such belts for five and 11 days respectively, despite Home Office regulations that the belt must be used for short periods only.

The Prison Reform Trust is shortly expected to produce a report for the Home Office calling for a complete ban on the use of what it calls restraints in British prisons. Unofficially the Home Office would like to see the body belt banned too – a working party has been looking into it for the past two years – but pressure from the prison officers and from some governors has so far ensured its continuing use.

So although Norman Tebbit announced in Parliament this week that from 22 February a DTI licence will be required to export Hiatt's equipment, the domestic market, at least for the time being, appears secure.

Suzanne Franks and Ivor Gaber

You'll need a licence from Tebbit to export these in future

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Glasgow's ice cream war

ONE OF Scotland's most bitter but least publicised industrial disputes celebrated its six-month birthday last week. Since being sacked for going on strike last July, eight young people – six of them women – have been picketing the Carousel Wafer factory at Shettleston in Glasgow every working day in an increasingly desperate battle for union recognition. Carousel is a family firm, run by owner-manager Allesandro Saccomando, a passionate anti-trade unionist.

For most of them, making ice-cream wafers and cones was their first job out of school and it was not until after two or three years' employment that they began to fight for improvements. Their wages were low (those under 18 took home £32 and those over 18 £37 for a 40-hour week), but it was the working conditions that were really appalling. 'The place was so dirty it made you sick', recalled shop steward, 20-year old Carol Rodger. 'I used to watch rats and mice running around and one lassie found a nest of dead mice in a box of cones. There was no heating so when it got cold we used to wear plastic bags on our feet.' One winter when the toilets froze, the workers were offered buckets and bottles of Dettol as their sanitary facilities.

One young girl, Lynnette Young, was working on a Youth Opportunities scheme at the factory when she lost the tips of her fingers in an accident. This led to an investigation by the government's Health and Safety Executive. The company was fined £200 last February for using machinery which did not conform to safety regulations and the Manpower Services Commission has subsequently refused to include the factory in any more YOP schemes. The Health and Safety Executive has visited the factory 14 times in the last two and a half years.

Workers at the Carousel factory first approached and joined the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) in Glasgow in December 1982. According to the workers, Carousel boss Allessandro Saccomando, swore that he would rather burn down his factory than accept a trade union.

Then on 25 July last year – upset by the dismissal of a colleague for allegedly hitting a foreman and frustrated by the lack of union recognition – eleven workers went on strike. Three days later they were all dismissed for breach of contract. One girl tried to take Carousel to an industrial tribunal for unfair dismissal, but was told at a pre-assessment hearing that there were no grounds for proceeding as sacking people for going on strike is perfectly legal. Two others dropped out, leaving the eight, aged between 17 and 21, to continue their struggle.

The strikers have been heartened by the backing they have received. Glasgow District Council, with the unusual agreement of the opposition Tory group, last September expressed full support. Delivery vans have been turned back from the factory gates and other workforces have agreed to boycott Carousel's goods. Because of pressure from the Council's Environmental Health Department and the Health and Safety Executive, Mr Saccomando has been forced to make improvements.

The pickets now accuse him of injuring two girls by deliberately driving his car at them and of employing a security officer (nicknamed 'The Gonk') to harass them. Mr Saccomando, via his lawyer, former Tory councillor Leonard Turpie (to whom all press inquiries are referred), denies these allegations and claims that thousands of pounds worth of damage has been done to the company's property by the pickets.

The right-wing Freedom Association, while denying any direct involvement in the dispute, has said it is 'a sort of mini-Grunwick'. The TGWU's district officer David Stark points out that 'these workers have effectively been deprived of any right to belong to a trade union. There are literally thousands of workers in the same position in Glasgow.

Rob Edwards

Donations can be sent to the Carousel workers, c/o TGWU, 216 West Regent Street, Glasgow

MISCELLANY

Colour supplement

In last week's *NS* there was no story about the new editor of the *Sunday Times*, Andrew 'Two Chauffeurs' Neil. The readers have got the message, we thought. But the pressure of public demand is such that we must, reluctantly, reopen the file. Two weeks ago, the staff of the *Sunday Times Magazine* gathered to hear Neil's plans for them. After overcoming an initial touch of petulance, in which Neil declared that he had 'neither the energy nor the inclination' to tell them his new ideas, 'Two Chauffeurs' revealed that he wanted no more international stories, no more photo-documentaries about wars, and no more pictures of starving children. These were 'Sixties and passé'. From the end of March he wants the emphasis to be on 'lifestyles and leisure'. Neil then went into private conference with Peter Jackson, the magazine's editor. Jackson must have put up a fight, because at the end of the day Neil emerged exhausted, saying that he had had an awful day and that he was late. He was going home and hoped his girlfriend was waiting for him: 'She'd better be on her back', he said. So *that's* what 'the *Sunday Times* woman' is like.

You can quote me

Newsweek has been working on a profile of Rupert Murdoch – not surprising when Murdoch is getting his claws into the *Chicago Sun Times* and making moves against the Warner Corporation. Slightly surprising, however, was that the Digger was in an open and expansive mood, giving an on-the-record interview about his doings. More surprising still, he positively encouraged *Newsweek*'s man to ask the opinions of his employees in London. 'Very sorry, but I don't talk to the press about Murdoch', was the reply from all Murdoch editors, including Andrew 'On Yer Back' Neil. Until, that is, they were told that Murdoch was in favour. Then Neil and the others rang back and couldn't have been more helpful. All except the Editor of *The Times*. It was not his policy to give interviews, he said, even if he had Murdoch's permission. But then Charles Douglas-Home's views on Murdoch have already been set down for all to read in Harry Evan's book *Good Times, Bad Times*.

Maintaining interest

The CBI's 'idiot guide' telling Nigel Lawson what to do in his Budget in words of one syllable is entitled, only slightly ambiguously, *Keep It Going*. At one stage the CBI's 'representations to the Chancellor' were going to be called *Keep It Up*.

Mutual admiration

Some time ago details were circulating in the Liberal Party of a questionnaire survey of 140 Liberal candidates of their views of the general election campaign. Unfortunately some of the more interesting findings were omitted. Asked 'which aspects of the national campaign hindered the most?' 44 replied, without prompting, 'Roy Jenkins'. A further 24 cited the fact that he was Prime Minister designate, 22 the problem of a dual leadership, while another 28 were more blunt, citing 'the SDP', SDP 'turncoats', or 'the Alliance'. Adding in those blaming Shirley Williams or William Rodgers, that's a staggering 90 per cent blaming the SDP in one form or another. Two quixotic candidates blamed 'nausea at mutual admiration'. Other interesting findings were that the briefing on animal rights was the most popular, and that three candidates said they thought the briefing on defence policy was the most useful. (The Liberal Party Organisation hadn't produced a briefing on defence.) Perhaps the findings of the survey were not to the executive committee's liking, because Alan Sherwell, who carried it out, was last month voted out of office both as Party vice chair and as 'director of policy promotion'.

Length and breadth

After years in which Tony Chater, editor of Not The Communist Party's Paper the *Morning Star*, has been reviled as Stalinist, bureaucrat, sectarian etc etc he has found an ardent new champion in Chris Mullin, editor of Never-to-be Lord Bruce's *Tribune*. According to last week's *Tribune*, the *Morning Star*'s defiant editors are defending their editorial freedom and the 'breadth' of the labour movement. This breadth has rather escaped the scrutiny of *Star* watchers who have noticed that the cheery box on the letters page welcoming 'letters and controversy on all subjects' has been replaced by one sternly bidding correspondents to keep below 350 words. More revealing perhaps is that as John Cox, Vice-President of CND explained to CND Council, his uncharacteristically pro-Soviet letter published in the *Star* of 13 January had been cut to 350 words by Chater, removing all the critical references to the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, letters attacking 'euro-communist' CND activist Sally Davison and Cox himself for earlier critical comments were allowed to ramble over 500 words. This is obviously nothing to do with the fact that while the *Star* searches for capital to buy its new printing press the Soviet Union has paid in advance for a year's supply of the *Morning Star*, instead of the usual three months' worth.

Can such things be?

Five women – an unprecedented number – were invited to join the once-prestigious *New Left Review*, following a recent, still unexplained mass exodus from the editorial committee. Instead of gratefully accepting, four of them – Barbara Taylor (winner of the Isaac Deutscher Memorial Prize last year), Lynne Segal, Hilary Wainwright and Kathy Porter (of Kollontai fame) – met in cabal and presented the board with a list of demands: the journal was to become a marxist-feminist publication, on which the women had editorial parity with the men. After due in-depth analysis of the origins of this crisis, the peculiarities of feminist solidarity etc, the surviving committee members of NLR rejected the women.

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Smokescreens against acid rain

IAN MACGREGOR has entered the debate on acid rain with the news that it is caused by volcanoes. 'If all industrial activity ceased tomorrow', he told the Newspaper Conference last Friday, 'there would still be acid rain for natural reasons and there always will be.' His comments come at a time when concern that air pollution damages babies as well as the environment is growing.

MacGregor based his observations on an eruption from El Chi- in southern Mexico, which two years ago sent a cloud of sulphuric gases into the stratosphere. 'Calculations suggest that . . . there may have been as much as 20 million tons of sulphuric acid aerosol in the atmosphere. Even a year later there were still about 8 million tons.'

The volcano theory is not new – scientists have known for some years that volcanic eruptions contribute to the natural sulphur content of the air – but the NCB statement marks a significant political departure. Until recently, the Coal Board has taken a neutral stance on acid rain. The new posture is an indication of increasing pressure from the Central Electricity Generating Board.

Sixty per cent of the UK's airborne sulphur dioxide – the central constituent of acid rain – comes from the coal-burning power stations of the CEGB which has been severely embarrassed by damaging comment at UK scientific conferences in September and December 1983. On 9 January this year, a report commissioned by the Department of the Environment indicated worrying levels of acidity in the rainfall over the UK.

On the same day, a 5,000 word article in the German magazine *Der Spiegel* linked sulphur dioxide emissions with 'cot deaths' (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome – SIDS). An analysis of the autopsies on 639 victims of SIDS in three German towns showed that 80 per cent of the babies had infected air passages, especially inflammation of the nose and throat. This can be particularly dangerous because very few babies breathe through the mouth when sleeping.

In March this year, representatives of the EEC will discuss a draft directive requiring member states to reduce their sulphur dioxide emissions by 60 per cent. Environmental groups are gearing up for International Acid Rain Week in April. Hence the pressure on the NCB.

The Coal Board, however, has problems of its own. Last year it rushed through a research project designed to remove sulphur from coal by 'deep-washing' it: but the findings of the project, to be completed by the end of February, are a disappointment. Instead of the 30 per cent sulphur removal that was hoped for, only 10 to 20 per cent can be achieved: coal-washing will not provide the remedy for industrial air pollution.

So the NCB will join the CEGB in putting up smokescreens of the non-acid variety. 'There is too much at stake', said Mr MacGregor on Friday, 'for decisions to be related to inadequate information about the causes and effects of airborne industrial pollution. The truth is there is no scientific consensus.'

Steve Elsworth

***Spiegel's* warning that acid rain can kill small children**

'People's Plan' bid for local Dockland's jobs

AT A CROWDED meeting in London's East Ham Town Hall on Monday night the people of Newham launched their plan to bring jobs and services back to the area.

The People's Plan for the Royal Docks is a unique scheme, the culmination of nine months of debate among those living and working in Newham about how best to develop the docks.

One in four are now out of work in Newham and the new jobs and prosperity promised three years ago when the London Docklands Development Corporation took on responsibility for regenerating the area have failed to materialise.

The People's Plan developed out of local opposition to the LDDC's proposal to use the Royal Docks for a private commuter airport, a scheme which enhances the glossy image the LDDC is painting to attract speculators to the docks, but guarantees few jobs.

The controversial scheme went to a public inquiry last summer and, with help from the GLC, objectors set up the People's Plan Centre to develop an alternative future for the docks. Thousands of local residents, workers and employers were asked to put forward their ideas for the 'Royals', at public meetings and surgeries.

The result is a document which is full of the life and experience of the people of Newham, a blueprint for development which makes full use of the area's physical assets and human skills.

The strongest alternative yet to the LDDC's speculative schemes for docklands, the plan envisages a complex of industrial units, co-operative developments, a container depot and shops. It also calls for improved transport and recreational facilities.

But the plan's success now rests on the outcome of the airport inquiry. The Inspector is due to publish his findings in April and, if permission is given to build the airport, the People's Plan will be squeezed out.

Ian Cobain

Activists step up campaign for black archive

BLACK ACTIVISTS in London have been stepping up their campaign to build Britain's first black archive. And last week a deputation from the group behind the project – the elaborately-named African People's Historical Monument Foundation – proposed to Lambeth Council that they be granted a vacant site in the centre of Brixton.

The idea of a black archive is now new, but was only properly taken up last year. The foundation's dozen organisers drew much of their inspiration from visits to New York's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. The Schomburg, one of Harlem's landmarks, contains a huge collection of manuscripts, videotapes, sculpture, oral-history recordings and music. And the chairman of the foundation, Len Garrison, thinks there's enough such material in this country to start up an archive like the Schomburg.

The foundation is looking for 'unofficial' as well as 'official' material. Their provisional list of contents mentions items as diverse as carnival costumes, snapshots and New Cross banners. 'The kind of things people keep in their attic or under the bed,' says Garrison.

The Brixton site was singled out because it was one of the centres of black immigration after the war. An architect has drawn up a blueprint – based on an African design – which puts the total costs at around £1.5 million. But last month the foundation was turned down by the Department of the Environment for funding under the Inner City Partnership scheme even though they had the support of Lambeth Council. The foundation is now looking for cash elsewhere, although as an interim measure the GLC has granted them £44,000 to set up the archive in a temporary base.

The organisers know it could be some time before they raise the £700,000 needed to complete the first phase of their proposed building, but, in the meantime, they want Lambeth to pledge them the site in order to make the task of fund-raising easier.

Clive Davies

CEGB ditches Sizewell deadline

A YEAR and a month into the Sizewell Inquiry, the Central Electricity Generating Board has just abandoned its proposals for getting the Sizewell B power station built to time and to cost. A new management system with key roles filled by the CEGB personnel has now been produced, involving a reduced role for the partly private-enterprise National Nuclear Corporation. The CEGB's new proposals match closely the advice given to the inquiry by Sir Alastair Frame, head of Rio Tinto-Zinc, who was called in by the inquiry's inspector, Sir Frank Layfield, to advise on making the Sizewell project run properly.

The CEGB now aims to run the Sizewell project almost entirely with its own personnel, using a new Project Management Board which will be chaired by CEGB board member John Baker. He also leads the CEGB's case at the inquiry. This group will be based at NNC's head office, but the new arrangement will use fewer of NNC's personnel than the old plan, and will cut down on the use made of Westinghouse, the company which developed the pressurised water reactor technology planned for Sizewell.

The CEGB's next worry is whether Layfield will be satisfied that the new arrangement is likely to work. The chance of building Sizewell B to time and cost is probably the key issue at the inquiry outside safety. The evidence from NNC – the expert witness on building reactors – has now been invalidated. One proof of evidence is by Dr Ned Franklin, who has since retired early from NNC, ahead of the new management changes. The other, on project management, has been entirely overtaken by the new plan.

Martin Ince

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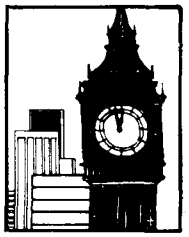

DUNCAN CAMPBELL

Unintelligent signalling: Howe was less than candid

IN EVERY SENSE, the government's decision unilaterally to remove GCHQ employees' employment rights and try to bully them out of union membership resulted from American pressure. Mrs Thatcher and Sir Geoffrey Howe know perfectly well that Cheltenham is effectively the local office of a US-based intelligence multinational.

Sir Geoffrey is also painfully relearning how the 'requirements of national security' are apt to rebound. Because those responsible for establishments like GCHQ never have to account publicly for what they do, they tend to get public reaction wrong. They got it wrong last week, just as they got it wrong in 1977, when they demanded that the ABC Official Secrets Act trial be launched against myself and others; and when they attempted to suppress the TV reportage of revelations of corruption within GCHQ by a former employee, Jock Kane, made here in 1980.

Direct pressure on the British government comes from the US National Security Agency, which is the senior partner in the multinational pact to gather 'sigint' or signals intelligence. But, despite the exotic nature of sigint, work at GCHQ is in general routine and ordinary; only a tiny minority of employees get involved in genuine undercover activities.

The Americans have been deeply involved in four recent events. They do not like the idea of strikes at all; some GCHQ outstations, such as Bude in Cornwall, are an integral part of the US network, in this case for monitoring international commercial communications satellites, and the strikes at Cheltenham three years ago did cut off further parts of the intelligence-sharing links. Geoffrey Prime's espionage directly compromised a major US satellite sigint gathering system; after his conviction, NSA's deputy director came to Britain *inter alia* to spell out the terms of continued partnership. As a direct consequence, the so-called submitting to 'polygraphs', or lie detectors, is to become compulsory requirement for employees.

Early this week, Cabinet Ministers – aggrieved at being caught unawares by Howe's announcement – were suggesting that the key item before Mrs Thatcher's cabinet sub-committee that decided the issue was neither the imminent forced introduction of lie detector tests, nor a more general political strategy against the unions, but the vulnerability of GCHQ's overall operations to disruption by a small group of computer operators. But message relaying computers have been in use at Cheltenham and its outstations for many years. The only new factor is a 52-station international sigint communications network, which was installed last year, and includes a major centre at Cheltenham. Its codename is PLATFORM; it too is American, and centred on NSA.

The timing gives Mrs Thatcher's gambit away. It has not taken three years for GCHQ's directors to assess the impact of the 1979-'81 strikes. But Howe's announcement is timed exactly to fit with the intensified use of lie detector machines, starting in the next few months.

On 12 May 1983, the British Security Commission report on the Prime spy case recommended the introduction of the polygraph here as the 'only measure' that would have stopped Prime. This announcement followed by only two months a presidential order to widen the use of lie detectors in the United States. Last summer, the head of the civil service admitted to the civil service unions' council that US pressure had led to the recommendation.

NSA believes in the polygraph, for which it claims 97.7 per cent accuracy. Many disagree; six months ago, a memorandum from the US Defense Department's own health director and senior medical adviser, Dr John Beary, pointed out that the polygraph 'does not work'. Dr Beary's memorandum, which was obtained and published by the *Washington Post*, has not previously been reported in Britain.

The polygraph, Beary warned, was 'not a lie detector but an excitement detector . . . (it) misclassifies 30 per cent to 50 per cent of innocent people as liars in field tests . . . I suspect the proposed policy will stimulate a flurry of lawsuits'. Similar suspicions cannot be far from the mind of Sir Geoffrey and his advisers.

Much was made last week of the fact that the legislation Howe used to strip GCHQ employees of their rights was introduced by Labour and already applies to employees of two other intelligence agencies. But there is a fundamental distinction between a secret intelligence organisation and an organisation producing secret intelligence. GCHQ is in the latter category.

Of Britain's four intelligence agencies, two – the Secret Intelligence Service (M16) and the Security Service (M15) – are wholly covert. Their headquarters and employees invariably have 'covers'. Not so Cheltenham. There are signs outside and entries in local telephone directories listing all its scattered listening stations. Jobs there are advertised in the orthodox way by the Civil Service Commission and trade unions have operated at Cheltenham for more than three decades without their loyalty or the security consciousness of their lay or full-time members being impugned.

The unions have also been performing their routine duties with equal lack of drama. Three or four union magazines, such as the suggestively-titled *Monitor* of the Association of Government Supervisors and Radio Officers, have been coming out for years. It has never been suggested that these journals threaten security. They are, however, packed with ordinary, everyday, humdrum, industrial relations activity – negotiations about meal breaks and overtime pay – and give the lie to the impression the government has tried to create that industrial relations at Cheltenham proceeded smoothly until the moment when, in support of national pay negotiations, GCHQ members were called out on strike.

During the course of the week the government sought to fortify its unattractive position with successively wider disclosures which, only a few years ago, they themselves would have regarded as constituting 'grave damage to national security'. By Tuesday, Howe's colleagues were listing world events into which, we are invited to infer, GCHQ's electronic sensors are normally plugged.

But the unions have also to grasp one nettle – is it true that the 1979 and 1981 strikes did disrupt GCHQ operations, as they claimed then and Mrs Thatcher claims now? Or is it not, as John Nott claimed then and the unions say now? The present conflict of accounts is damaging to all concerned.

The reasonable view is that John Nott was fibbing and that the unions' 1981 claims to have disrupted operations were right. But it is also reasonable to assert that it didn't much matter, since (and as we have argued here in the past) GCHQ's output is now primarily economic and commercial intelligence.

The civil service unions cannot, however, seek to escape the dilemma about the presentation of their past activities by derogating the value of GCHQ's work. Thus caught, the intended compromise of offering a 'no-strike' agreement for a few workers, whose task is acknowledged to be critical by both union members inside GCHQ and the government, seems sound. This latest banana skin has already damaged the government's image and the unions need to preserve their credibility to help keep the humiliating and pseudo-scientific cult of the lie-detector from sweeping into other parts of the civil service – and to keep alive their employees' basic rights. □

Peter Kellner will be back next week.

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Fundamental rights under attack

As the trade union movement recovers from the government's sneak attack on GCHQ employees, Jeremy McMullen reveals that it is part of a new strategy

SIR GEOFFREY Howe's coup against trade unionism at Government Communications Headquarters, Cheltenham, was totally unexpected. It has revealed the extent of the restrictions that are placed on a whole range of employees in and out of government service. The move was the more surprising, since the trend in official opinion has been to look for *non-legal* ways of dealing with the perceived 'problems' of industrial activity in the 'essential services'.

After all, the Tories themselves in their 1971 Industrial Relations Act restored to gas, water and electricity workers their liberty to take industrial action. And the government's 1981 Green Paper on trade union immunities came down against legislation in this area:

> In general, workers in key sectors have exercised their considerable power to disrupt the community with restraint . . . If they have taken industrial action at all they have usually maintained essential services and supplies. Against this background the central question is whether the imposition of legal restrictions on the ability of such groups to strike at this stage in the development of their industries is likely to be fruitful.

The Paper concluded by recognising:

> There might be great difficulties in making strikes by groups of workers illegal. It is better to argue that the most effective way of making progress on this question is through voluntary 'no-strike' agreements between management and unions in those sectors of industry where strikes might threaten the national interest.

Similar conclusions have been reached by three official Inquiries in as many years. Megaw (civil servants), May (prison service) and the Royal Commission on the National Health Service drew back from prohibiting industrial action by certain groups of workers in exchange for guaranteed procedures for pay determination and arbitration.

Hints of the change in government attitude were made in the last Tory election manifesto, where it was envisaged that the requirement of unions to hold ballots of their members before calling industrial action would 'reduce the risk of strikes in essential services'. These proposals are now being debated in the Trade Union Bill. In addition, the Conservatives made a commitment in the manifesto to 'consult further about the need for industrial relations in specific essential services to be governed by adequate procedure agreements, breach of which would deprive industrial action of immunity'. Last week's announcement made a mockery of that commitment to consult; and it went significantly further than anything presaged in the manifesto.

EQUALLY DISTRUBING is the revelation that the action at GCHQ is only the tip of an iceberg of powers in already existing legislation to control industrial activity. It is no consolation to realise that many of these powers were created by the 1974/79 Labour administration. True, some of them were lifted wholesale from the repealed Industrial Relations Act, but other Acts which were wholly novel – dealing with race relations, sex discrimination, and employment protection – gave Ministers power to block employees' rights 'in the interest of safeguarding national security'.

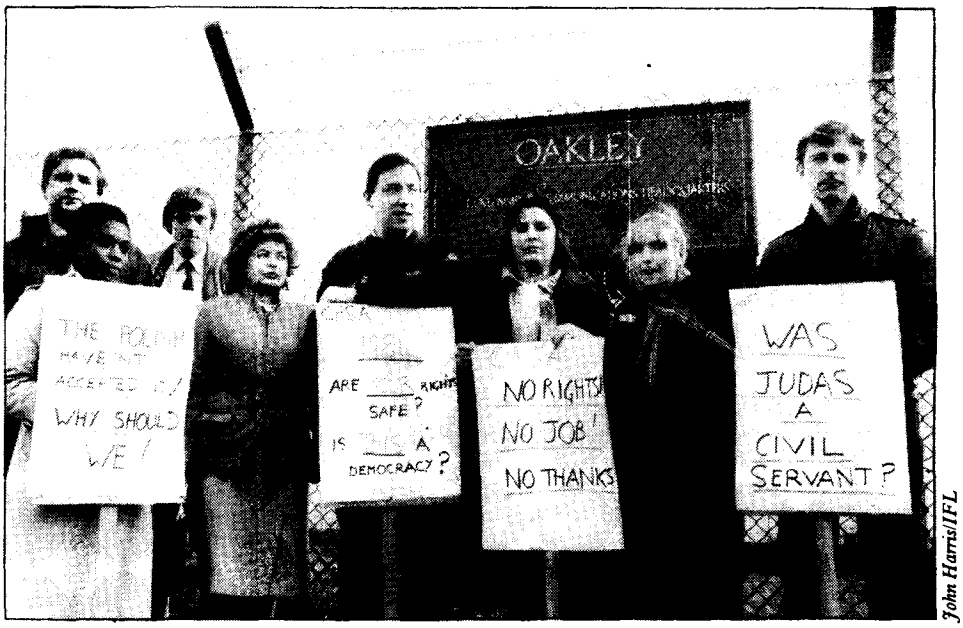
The authority under which the Foreign Secretary acted last week (section 138(4) of the Employment Protection Consolidation Act 1978) enables the Minister to declare that 'employment of a description specified . . . or of a particular person so specified' is to be exempted from the classification of 'Crown employment'. It has always been doubtful whether Crown employment carries with it the normal incidences of a contract of employment, so throughout employment legislation it has been necessary to make specific reference to apply the laws or parts of the laws to civil servants. Since the section applying the Employment Protection Acts to Crown employees has been removed as far as GCHQ staff are concerned, they are now left with only their common law rights.

At common law Crown employees can be dismissed *at will* and cannot sue on the basis of their contracts, as other employees can. While clearly that legislation was intended to remove certain protections from civil servants – in relation to redundancy pay and to paid time off for carrying out public or political duties – no one envisaged whole groups of employees being wholly deprived of their legal protection.

The risk is not confined to government employees, for in tribunal proceedings a Minister can certify that any action was taken 'in the national interest' so as to preclude claims relating to unfair dismissal, victimisation for trade union activity and discrimination on the grounds of race or sex. Such a certificate cannot be challenged and can be made in respect of any worker – making particularly vulnerable, for example, employees in the private sector working for defence contractors.

The police and the armed forces are already prevented from joining trade unions and from taking industrial action. So are merchant seafarers, unless their ships are berthed in a UK port and 48 hours notice has been given. It is also possible for legal action to be brought against postal and telecommunication workers (including workers in the private sector if the 1984 privatisation measures are carried through).

There have also been suggestions, notably by the former Master of the Rolls, Lord Denning, that industrial action by school caretakers which interferes with a local authority's duty to provide educational



John Harris/IFL

Civil service picket at GCHQ Cheltenham: Howe says they're a threat to national security

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facilities, or by printers which interferes with 'the freedom of the press' might also be illegal. Add to these a number of restrictions contained in 'codes of practice' covering members of the caring professions and the number of people whose industrial activity is curtailed is already substantial. This is without any further extension of the concept of 'national interest' or of what services are 'essential'.

Whether or not the government is forced to change its position on Cheltenham, it has certainly moved the argument away from one about basic constitutional freedoms to a discussion on 'no strikes' clauses. Legal challenges to the Cheltenham decision in the British courts are hopeless. A certificate given by the Minister is absolutely conclusive, in the absence of fraud, or a patent inaccuracy in the certificate. Whether the Foreign Secretary did act in the national interest is a matter for which only he is accountable, for as Mr Justice Sankey said in 1927:

> This question is more fitting for the High Court of Parliament than for the High Court of Justice. After all, what is in the national interest is rather a question of policy to be pursued by Parliament from time to time than a question of legal decision.

A certificate cannot, though, prevent GCHQ employees *joining* a union. They are deprived of Employment Protection Act rights to complain to a tribunal; and of internal civil service rights, if they are subjected to disciplinary action, or dismissed. But membership cannot be prevented and breach of £1,000 undertaking not to join is unenforceable.

Challenges can, however, be mounted in various international circles. The announcement by the Foreign Secretary is clearly in breach of International Labour Organisation Conventions 87 and 98; the European Convention of Human Rights 1950; the European Social Charter 1961; the UN Convention of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966 and on Civil and Political Rights 1966; and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948. All of these represent undertakings voluntarily accepted by the UK government to permit freedom of association, the right to belong to workers organisations, and to bargain collectively. Only two of them allow restrictions to be made on people who are engaged in the administration of the State.

Inevitably, the GCHQ decision needs to be attacked by trade unionists on the grounds that it is morally wrong in any circumstances to deny workers the right to join a trade union. Any discussion of a 'no strike' agreement would need to have the full approval of those members who were giving up that most basic of workers' rights. Whether the maintenance of non-stop spying is an activity for which such sacrifices should be made is a matter for those employed on this kind of work to decide. But the whole trade union movement has an interest in attacking the decision, since a spillover into other 'essential services' and activities touching the 'national interest' organisations could become unstoppable. □

SOCIETY

Men only, please

Barbara Rogers describes the workings of a sexist national institution

> My grandparents spent every evening in the club for years: their whole life was the club. When my grandfather died, the club sent a wreath to the funeral and had a two-minute silence for him. My grandmother went on going, just the same, and she died two years later. There was no wreath, no letter, nothing to show that they even recognised that she had died. I was pretty upset about it and I went to ask why they'd not done the same for her as they had for him. They said it was the policy.

THIS WOMAN'S story is echoed by the hundreds of letters in the files of the Equal Rights in Clubs Campaign for Action (ERICCA). Women and men have written about their shock and distress caused by the pettiness of clubs meant for the whole community, but which are controlled by a clique of men determined to keep women out of decision-making and full participation in club facilities. Women who have attended regularly with their husbands have found themselves barred from the club where only he could officially be a member, following his death when they most needed the companionship offered by the club. They become virtually non-persons in their own home town.

'The rules' are invoked constantly by club committees to exclude members of their own community. Racial discrimination is common since the clubs successfully argued in court that the Race Relations Act, worded to protect 'members of the public', does not apply to their membership which is 'private'. People can be excluded without any reason being given. Rules can also be used to keep in line those men who are privately very critical of the clubs' policies towards women: if they lose their club membership they also forfeit the card issued by the Club and Institute Union (CIU) which gives them access to activities on a national scale.

With an atmosphere of intimidation in some of the worst clubs, there is also a streak of petty vindictiveness: a dog given the CIU card which no woman is allowed to have, games facilities open to children but not to women, white lines painted on the floor which women are told not to cross and other nasty power plays which would seem merely childish if they were not so far-reaching in their effects.

The CIU reigns over all this with a rod of iron, keeping clubs in line. There are overwhelming pressures on clubs to affiliate to the CIU and great nervousness about the possibility of losing that link. As ERICCA's Brenda Heywood puts it:

> It's like having a Little Chef restaurant. Everything is thought out for you: you get cheaper beer than a purely private club, and you can book entertainers on the club circuit. You also have a structure and network to refer to if there are any problems, and more income from the bar since you can let in anybody who has a CIU card. The inter-club competitions are all organised through the CIU, and they bring in a lot of people and therefore income.

CIU affiliation also gives a club the indispensable stamp of approval, making the CIU a far more awesome authority than the Registry of Friendly Societies to which clubs are accountable under law.

There is special provision in the Friendly Societies Act 1974 for Working Men's Clubs and in its publication, *Rules for a Registered Working Men's Club*, the Registry provides a set of model rules. These are not binding by law, but any club which sticks to them knows it is staying within the law.

Clubs which specifically discriminate against women all cite 'the rules'. So I picked three of them to look at more closely. They are Highfield House Social Club in South Elmsall, the Wakefield City Working

Sheila Capstick playing snooker before the club brought in the 'men only' rule

Gordon Cooper

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Men's Club, and the Elmete Social Club near Leeds. All three had identical 'rules' regulating women's behaviour both as members and as visitors. The rule on *Lady Members* states the objective to be discrimination, and in addition provides for 'special regulations' about women to be made at any time as the committee saw fit. All three clubs were using the standard printed rule book of the CIU, and all had pasted the printed addition into the book:

> Lady members shall not be entitled to attend general meetings, or vote at elections, and shall not be eligible to hold office or propose or second candidates for office or introduce visitors. *They shall be subject to such special regulations as the committee may from time to time make regarding lady members.* The number of persons admitted to membership under this rule shall not result in them being significant in proportion to the total membership (my emphasis).

What are these 'special regulations' that a committee can suddenly introduce? Under law, club rules can only be amended by a general meeting, and are invalid until they have been submitted to and approved by the Registry of Friendly Societies. A Registry spokesman expressed surprise at this discovery of a 'grey area' and strongly denied that it suggested a club committee could make up any regulations concerning women. If a club was changing rules outside the normal procedure it was, he confirmed, 'going outside the law'. The issue would have to be resolved either by the Registry itself or in a court action brought by an aggrieved party.

The courts may soon be called upon to make such a decision. Last year, Sheila Capstick, snooker-player and founder of ERICCA, was expelled from the Elmete Social Club on the sole authority of its secretary, Jack Dobson. He claimed she had brought the club into disrepute by having her photograph taken by the press in the car park as part of her campaign to have the club's men-only ruling on the use of snooker tables revoked. Sheila has challenged his right to do this under the club rules (which she had to get from the Registry as the club, of which she is a member, refused to show them to her). The rules specify that someone can only be expelled after a full hearing by the management committee has voted by a two-thirds majority for expulsion. Sheila appealed to the CIU against the Secretary's decision at New Year. The CIU has demanded she pay £50 (returnable if the appellant wins) before it will arbitrate, in contravention of the Elmete Club's rules which specify a payment of 10 shillings (50p).

THE CIU CLUB network is big business, with its 4,000 or so clubs, four million men affiliated to the CIU individually, and perhaps two to three million women belonging to the clubs but denied CIU cards. The combined club turnover runs into tens of millions of pounds a year. In some areas the clubs have pushed out the pubs in the search for business. The CIU's own income is over £2 million a year, with assets of over £3 million. In June 1983 it set up C.I.U. Club Management Ltd, a handy tax-avoidance measure (a device legalised by the 1981 Companies Act).

All my attempts to get an interview, comment or even the most basic information out of the CIU, at its thickly carpeted headquarters in Islington, met with determined resistance. This organisation, employing 162 staff, was unable or unwilling to provide the answer to any question or to make any comment at all on the question of discrimination against women or indeed any other topic. Mr J. Johnson, the Secretary, broke his silence only to offer an interview at a time safely after my stated deadline; when I then came back later he would supply no comment after all, and even his secretary became strangely unreachable.

Such secrecy protects the considerable power exercised by the CIU over vast swathes of leisure life. The CIU runs by far the greatest range of sporting leagues and other competitions of any organisation in Britain; it is a dominant influence over the big club games of snooker and darts – both now elevated to professional rank with big prizes and enviable career prospects for the star TV players who emerge from club ranks. Many of the new 'rules' produced by club committees have been aimed at the women who are starting to win snooker matches against the men – and have suddenly found themselves excluded from practising the game or playing in the leagues.

Probably the most important area of influence for the CIU clubs, however, is in politics, especially Labour politics. Most party members know how much wheeling and dealing is done over a pint, especially when it comes to selecting candidates – and in many Labour strongholds those pints are drunk in places which exclude women. Many of the Labour MPs from safe seats in Wales, Scotland, the Midlands and North of England are club members, and would certainly be interested in promoting club values and objectives.

The CIU has never been shy about cashing in its political assets. It has played the leading role in campaigning to keep down the prices of beer through thick and thin, while showing no concern about the food and other basic necessities of life for the whole of a working-class family rather than just the man who belongs to the club.

There are also a number of Liberal clubs, many of them affiliated to the CIU. Several of them discriminate against women, and of course CIU affiliation itself imposes such discrimination in terms of the issue of CIU cards to club members. Even more important is the vast network of Conservative clubs, which have their own association (the ACC). Some of the worst discrimination cases which have led to ERICCA pickets have involved Conservative clubs. George Tremlett cheerfully admits that they are just as bad as the CIU clubs: 'There is something very backward about the men going into clubs'. Margaret Thatcher has herself let it be known, via a letter to a Hampshire club, that she is unhappy about the discrimination. The popular myth is that the Tory party is run by women: the reality is that, while women do most of the work, the local parties are controlled in many cases from their men-only enclaves.

WOMEN HAVE always been important in the CIU club movement, supporting clubs as a community resource even while cliques of men were organising their takeover of the committees. It was women of the temperance movement as well as those of the wider trade union and labour movements who founded many of the earliest clubs and institutes – for women as well as men. The first Council of the Working Men's Club and Institute Union in the 1860s had eight women and 14 men.

By the beginning of this century it had become all-male, reflecting the anti-women strand of the clubs' tradition which was expressed early on by Rev W. T. Marriott who argued in a pamphlet that working-class men should be provided with men-only clubs along the lines of the elite London clubs such as White's and the Carlton. Thus would men be persuaded to abandon the fealties of class in favour of the privileges of sex – and cheap beer.

It is in fact the women's activities which have always been the best organised and are now, at a time of falling attendances at club functions, consistently well supported. Women organise 'ladies' nights', bingo, fund-raising, family nights, outings and events for the children and elderly people. Most of the clubs would close down without all this, and the new ones now being opened are fully aware of it. They avoid the term 'Working Men's Club' and actively recruit women into full membership – although still forced to discriminate in the issue of CIU cards.

The progress towards equal rights is being held back by the CIU Executive of 31 men. Faced with the growing demand to stop discriminating against women, the Executive has refused to allow the issue to be debated by the annual delegate conference. Instead it organised a ballot of club committees last December which resulted in 'overwhelming defeat' of the proposal that women be permitted to receive CIU cards. At the 1982 conference Derek Dormer, the CIU President, spoke of the failure of the equal rights campaign. 'But we are not sitting back on our laurels and saying we have beaten back the enemy,' he reported. 'We will continue to watch the situation.' This is the same 'enemy' that works hard for the clubs, not to mention for the male members.

The equal rights campaigners, women and men, argue that they are far more committed to a healthy club movement than is the CIU. There was a brief hope that Jo Richardson's Sex Equality Bill would remove the clubs' licence to discriminate, but there was not enough campaigning by the Labour Party or women's movement to support it. Are political activists in touch with the women whose lives are so marked by the clubs – and their exclusion from club rights? □

Barbara Rogers's latest book is 52%: Getting women's power into politics (*The Women's Press, London, 1983, £4.50*).

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CHESTERFIELD

Let battle commence

Bob Woffinden on the political importance of media coverage in the coming by-election

IT GIVES me no pleasure to say so, but Tony Benn is going to have his work cut out to win the Chesterfield by-election. For a start, he is a southerner, and in this country the further north one travels the more diffused are indigenous suspicions of southern interlopers. In this respect, the locally born Phillip Whitehead would have been the natural Labour candidate.

The main reason, though, is simply that it's a notable by-election and patterns of voting at notable by-elections have become increasingly bizarre. The first by-election of this Parliament, Penrith and the Border, was sensational enough. Certainly, there was no logical explanation in psephology for a party winning a landslide general election one month and all but losing one of its safest seats the next.

The Orpington by-election in March 1962 was a watershed in more ways than one. Eric Lubbock turned a 14,760 Conservative majority into one of 7,855 for the Liberals and the result indicated a great improvement in the standing of the Liberal Party. But it was also the point at which sensational by-election results started to become commonplace.

The timing of Orpington was significant. The first by-election ever covered by television while still in progress had been Rochdale in 1958. Between then and 1962, TV gradually became less bashful, so by Orpington ITN 'had outside broadcast cameras inside the hall during the count, as part of the first special coverage of a by-election'. First 'special coverage', first sensational result – coincidence?

During the 1960s and 1970s voting patterns at by-elections became increasingly mercurial. In July 1966 the Welsh Nationalist, Gwynfor Evans, won the Carmarthen by-election when the reported odds against his victory had been 2,000 to 1. The only seats the Labour Party won in the 1979 general election were those it had surrendered in unnatural by-election results during the previous Parliament: Ashfield, Birmingham Stechford, Walsall and Workington. The pre-Falklands by-elections during Mrs Thatcher's first administration illustrated a similar volatility on the part of the electorate.

Voting patterns at by-elections contrast sharply with those at general elections because the result is frequently immaterial, and because the constituency becomes the focus of the media glare. In such circumstances, using one's vote to champion the underdog, or humble the great, or simply to put one's locale on the political map, becomes a thrilling and positive exercise. As communities rarely covered in the media take centre stage for a day, a week, or a month, so votes are cast in anticipation of the headlines rather than in line with normal political allegiances.

Of course, the media scrutiny not only encourages exciting voting; it explains, via the opinion polls, what the most exciting vote is. Thus, in Chesterfield, if the Liberal candidate draws ahead of the Conservative and Independent Labour candidates in the polls, he will attract the bulk of the anti-Benn vote. In this respect, Benn will be hoist with his own petard, for he has often argued that there is no difference between voting Conservative, Alliance, or even right-wing Labour.

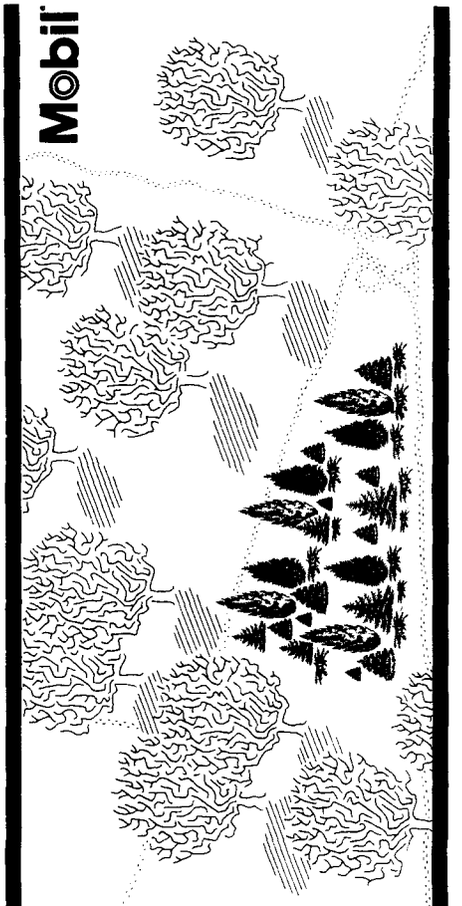
If this theory is correct, Benn's chances in Chesterfield will be vitiated not so much by the quality of media coverage, as by the quantity of it. His downfall will be plotted not by the *Daily Mail* or the *Sun*, but by Vincent Hanna, Ivor Crewe, perhaps even Peter Kellner. Benn's own remarks in his *Guardian* column this week, in which he referred to the media festival of by-elections, implied recognition of this.

Chesterfield, of course, is already in the spotlight, before the election date has even been fixed. *Newsnight* (26 January) covered a borough council by-election in the safe Labour ward of New Whittington, which the Liberals won, and the result was picked up by the press. Television stations, national and local newspapers, opinion pollsters – all are even now making plans to build their media mountain. The stage is set for a famous by-election campaign and the inevitable, sensational outcome.

There is no suggestion that any of this is in any way improper. Despite some murmurings, there has as yet been no concerted move to circumscribe psephological interest in a by-election campaign; nor should there be. The essence of democracy is that people are entitled to use their votes frivolously, as well as seriously. This hardly defiles the democratic process.

Benn referred in the *Guardian* to the 'great issues which will be decided on polling day'. But what great issues? The Chesterfield by-election is wholly irrelevant in terms of Parliamentary arithmetic. The Labour party will scarcely be damaged by the result, which will be passed off as the freak it will surely become. The only 'great issue' to be decided will be that of Tony Benn's parliamentary future. □

Mobil



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LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Restricted rating

David Habakkuk and Stewart Lansley examine how much the new rate Bill can really save and the chaos it may cause

IT IS EASY to see the government's Bill to control rates directly as the result of hurried improvisation, a near panic measure to compensate for failing to deliver on their promise to get rid of rates. In fact, taking direct control over local authority spending is in practice the inevitable outcome of the conflicts which have plagued their local government policy since 1979.

Given the high priority Mrs Thatcher attached to rolling back the state, it was inevitable that her government would seek sharp cuts in total local government spending. But this was not the Tories only aim. They were convinced that many Labour-controlled urban authorities were spendthrift and were determined that as far as possible these should bear the brunt of cuts. To complicate matters still further, the party had a long-standing commitment to get rid of rates.

The problem for the Tories was that,with the weapons they had, these aims conflicted. Cuts in total spending could have been achieved quite simply by sharply cutting government grants, whereupon most authorities would have cut spending rather than make draconian rises in rates. But these councils most likely to make cuts were precisely the low-spending shires the Tories wanted to protect – furthermore such a strategy would inevitably have meant substantial rate rises.

In its first two rate settlements the government made little attempt to cut the total grant. For 1979/80 Labour had been planning to fund 61 per cent of local spending with central grants; for 1981/2, the Tories were still planning to fund 60 per cent. Instead, they attempted to devise new weapons that would deliver significant aggregate savings by selectively penalising the 'overspenders'.

First, they changed the system of distributing grant. They introduced a new, supposedly more objective, measure of what councils need to spend – the Great Related Expenditure Assessment (GREA). They then declared that councils spending above this level would find that the proportion of additional expenditure funded by grant would decrease, and in the end become negative. But it soon became clear that GREAs were much too capricious to provide the basis for an effective punitive system.

A further system of penalties was therefore introduced in 1981/2, under which councils lost grant if they spent above a new 'target' which was related to past spending. Since then this system of penalties and targets has been made progressively tighter, so that in the coming financial year councils substantially above target may have to raise as much as £6 from their ratepayers in order to finance each extra £1 of spending.

But so far this system has not enabled the government to meet any of its three objectives. Far from falling, total local government spending has risen by 3.1 per cent in real terms since 1978/9. Even the 'model' shire county councils have increased their spending by 0.4 per cent – not entirely surprising, as pressure has only been put on them belatedly. The government's chief target, the metropolitan counties and the inner London boroughs, have increased their spending by 18 per cent and 9.5 per cent respectively. Meanwhile, the combination of rising expenditure and sharp increases in penalties has caused rates to rocket – in real terms by 11 per cent nationally, and 26 per cent in inner London.

One reason for this apparent total failure has been the very nature of the penalties. Several of the worst 'overspenders' – the Greater London Council, ILEA, and Camden – have now lost all their grant, so the government has no further weapons against them. Beyond this however there is a much more basic problem. The councils the government has been trying to influence – those Labour councils with a strong ideological commitment to high spending – are precisely those most likely to respond to cuts in their grants by raising rates rather than cutting services.

GIVEN THE effective bankruptcy of their local government policy, it was thus likely that sooner or later the Tories would move to take direct powers over local spending. Patrick Jenkin's Bill in fact provides reserve powers that would enable him to set the rate of every authority in the country. But he and other ministers have tried to defuse opposition by suggesting that the government's aims can be achieved merely by use of the more limited selective powers which, we are told, are to be applied to some 12-20 councils only. This claim looks – to put it midly – unconvincing.

In the Bill, a number of different criteria for the selection of authorities to be selectively rate-capped are mentioned. Prominence is given to the relationship between budget and GREA, but expenditure in relation to target and past rate increase is also mentioned. In the accompanying table we show 31 authorities with budgets more than 20 per cent above GREA. Of these, 20 also had spending more than 3 per cent above target. It is reasonable to assume that these are the authorities most likely to be on the selected list. Besides the ILEA and the GLC, they include 3 metropolitan counties, 3 metropolitan districts, 3 shire districts, and 9 inner London boroughs. With the exception of Brent, all are Labour controlled.

How substantial are the savings that could be made by rate-capping these authorities? Local authority experts agree – and senior civil servants confirm – that it is impracticable to make much more than a 5 per cent real cut in a council budget in a single year; beyond that, the costs of redundancy

Likely rate-capped authorities

Authority	Authorities more than 20% above GREA and more than 3% above target	Excess of budget over GREA 83/84	Excess of budget over target 83/84	Rate increase in 1984/5 with a 5% real spending cut	Expenditure reduction achieved
		%	%	%	£m
City of London		250.5	1.7	+0.7	2.934
Thamesdown	●	84.5	6.8	−0.9	0.748
G.L.C.	●	81.7	53.2	−1.6	45.299
S. Yorks	●	75.9	5.9	−0.9	8.823
Camden	●	65.0	8.6	−4.5	5.68
Greenwich	●	63.7	21.0	−11.7	3.207
T. Hamlets		61.0	2.5	+2.6	3.306
I.L.E.A.	●	56.1	12.8	−0.8	44.81
Lewisham	●	51.0	3.4	+0.3	3.972
Laugbaurgh		50.9	−4.0	+4.5	0.703
Basildon	●	50.1	10.5	+4.0	0.658
Lambeth	●	39.4	9.5	+3.5	5.685
Hackney	●	37.6	4.5	−0.4	4.247
Haringey	●	37.0	8.7	+2.2	6.853
Southwark	●	35.0	16.7	−0.7	5.246
Bristol		33.8	−3.6	+1.4	1.716
Middlesbrough		32.8	0.6	+2.9	0.790
Norwich		32.7	1.3	−1.6	0.551
Reading		31.6	1.1	−0.9	0.558
Merseyside	●	31.6	9.1	−0.5	9.278
Newcastle	●	30.8	4.6	−1.9	6.58
Islington	●	29.1	9.8	7.7	3.956
Blackburn		27.6	0.8	7.5	0.708
Tyne & Wear	●	27.4	8.0	1.6	7.599
Sheffield	●	26.4	6.9	−1.9	11.505
Manchester		25.6	1.4	2.2	12.714
Leicester	●	23.4	13.8	−3.6	1.313
Brent	●	22.6	6.6	−1.5	7.381
N. Tyneside	●	22.0	6.2	−0.8	4.037
N. Yorks		22.0	2.0	−5.0	9.938
Hammersmith		21.0	0.3	+1.8	2.951

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payments outweigh the savings. But 5 per cent real cuts in all the 20 authorities shown in the table would only yield a saving of £187 million, small in relation to this year's £770 million 'overspend', let alone the amounts the government had hoped to cut from local spending back in 1979.

And while the government can look for only modest savings from these 20 authorities, it has to accept that its weapons for dealing with non rate-capped 'overspenders' will become progressively less effective.

As the government is well aware, the whole system of penalties suffers from one basic drawback. When a penalty is first imposed, a council which chooses to defy the government has to make a substantial rate increase in order pay for it. But in subsequent years it does not have to make any further real rate increase in order to continue to pay that same level of penalty. So if the government wishes to maintain pressure on councils that have chosen to defy it, it has to tighten penalties year by year.

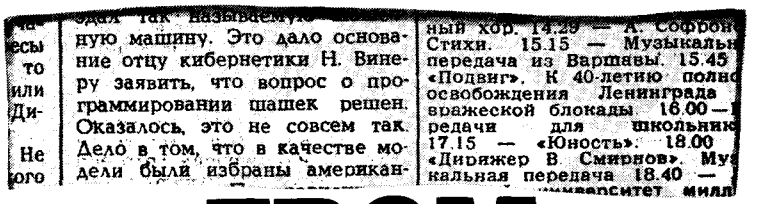
Sooner or later even the most determined government would have to stop tightening penalties or else it would produce a system where any spending above the government target would automatically cause the loss of all grant. In fact the extension of the penalties system is already hitting a significant number of Tory councils.

FURTHER tightening of the penalties system is likely to be impractical for another reason. Given the limited scale of savings that can be expected in a rate-capped authority in a single year, penalties will still be incurred. And if the penalties are tightened, the amount of penalty they pay could even be increased. It is thus possible that rates could have to go up in rate-capped authorities and even – if the penalty increase exceeds the savings made – rise by more than the rate of inflation.

Had rate-capping been introduced for the financial year 1984/5 it would have taken all the Department of the Environment's ingenuity to stop this happening. Computer calculations made for LWT's *The London Programme* show that because of the sharp tightening of penalties next year the impact of rate-capping would have been extremely erratic.

If the government wants to cut total local spending, it will thus be pushed inexorably towards using rate-capping very much more widely. However widespread use of rate-capping might easily turn into a bureaucratic nightmare. The government is legally obliged to consider the representations made by councils: wily council treasurers will be sure to send in exhaustively-documented presentations several hundred pages long. Naturally these will have to be discussed with senior officials, who are thus likely to find that rate-capping 20 authorities – let alone a hundred or more – places impossible demands on their resources and patience. Attempts to short cut such procedure are likely to produce charges of arbitrariness and lead to challenges in the courts and a load of bad publicity. □

The London Programme's *analysis of rate capping will be shown on ITV 1 on Friday, 3 February.*



FROM THE MINISTRY OF TRUTH

There may not exist in Moscow any building which proclaims itself to be The Ministry of Truth.

yet in the Soviet Union the only truth you hear is that selected by the State.

And then, it is often distorted in a ruthless and efficient manner far more deadly than anything imagined by George Orwell.

Even the journalists themselves apply censorship quite instinctively, without reasoning, from a life long habit. They are so conditioned by the system that many are no longer capable of recognising the truth, let alone writing it.

"For in the Soviet Union, censorship is life and life is censorship: the one cannot go on without the other."

In tomorrow's Sunday Telegraph, Oleg Bitov, once a senior editor on the important Moscow weekly 'The Literary Gazette', who fled to Britain last autumn tells his own story of how truth is hidden from the Soviet People.

The Sunday Telegraph has secured exclusive world rights to his story. You can read it, all of it, in next week's Sunday Telegraph.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

30p. with Telegraph Sunday Magazine

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DIARY

John Pilger

Sydney

Of the cities I've lived in and passed through, Sydney remains the most endearing, generous and beautiful: a place with a sense of joy that in summertime is like a presence in its undulating easy-going streets. Why Australians bother to compare Sydney with San Francisco or Rio I don't know: it is so much finer and the most vital expression of Australian civilisation, which *L'Express*, the Paris weekly, recently described as 'perhaps the last dream of the decade . . . no other Eldorado in the world can express or incarnate the hopes, the aspirations of the old world'. I doubt if such a munificent observation would have fallen from the lips of my great-great grandfather, Francis McCarthy, on the day he arrived in Sydney from County Roscommon in Ireland. He was in leg irons at the time, having been sentenced to be transported for 'making political agitation' – although he, like most convicts later given their 'ticket of leave' in the colony, showed no desire to return to the old world. Today's fashionable discovery of an antipodean 'Eldorado' bemuses those Australians who recall the patronising set of views and stereotypes of not so long ago and beloved still by mostly Pom followers of vintage yawns Dame Edna, Les and Clive: the latter I heard here reading his memoirs on the radio, sharing with us the experience of being 'born again' when his ship left Sydney Harbour. *Jeez.*

○

Sydney in midsummer: Joan Sutherland in the park, free; Tchaikovsky in the same park, free; a production of *Twelfth Night* acclaimed as the most imaginative in the history of the modern theatre; a clutch of new plays, lots of good jazz; and afloat on the harbour a barge on which a full orchestra played, oblivious to the swell. At the Sydney Cricket Ground there have been the Aussies and the Windies and the Pakis (the latter, like 'Poms', being a term of affection here). Sitting in the sanctity of The Hill, fielding the blowies and the tinnies of spent neck oil, I was advised on the historical meaning of cricket by my mother, a pioneer Australian teacher in her eighties who still bowls and bats and retains strong views on the 1932/3 English side of 'bodyliners' whose iniquitous (her word) bowling tactics almost caused Australia to leave the Empire – the only time it almost did.

○

When I first saw the north-east of England I knew that the crooked streets in which I had grown up were not originals, not even the outside dunnies with their leeward list. The difference: the original lay down my hill, over tar in the street that turned to hot putty in the heat and into a fine mist of salt coming off the Pacific. It was Bondi Beach. In London I relished Michael Blakemore's delicious film, *A Short History of the Australian Surf* . For me it filled a gap which none of the new wave Australian films has done; it placed 'the beach' at the centre of Australian civilisation.

Like Blakemore, I grew up 'on Bondi', with its green, even-running, seldom-menacing surf and fine crystal white sand, from which good life sprang in a way not known in Europe. It is at the beach, in this over-governed country, where you find the Australian democracy and egalitarianism. Many Australians of English, Polish, Turkish, Italian, Greek, Lebanese, Chilean and Chinese origin probably only complete their immigrant's journey when they arrive on an Australian beach which is always public and free, with an 'Esky' (portable fridge), a tube of zinc cream, a kid and a gran. Surfing at Bondi with my own youngster, riding gently rolling 'boomers' then waiting for them to rise again, with, beyond, the endless sweep of the greatest ocean, amounted to a joy pure and simple: much more the essence of being an Australian than the myths of an outback we hardly know.

○

My favourite patriotic T-shirt says simply 'Thanks Yanks', referring of course to the Australian yachting victory in the America's Cup last year. It has been suggested that new immigrants might like to swear allegiance before the keel of the wonder craft itself, which would be slightly less ridiculous than the present oath to a queen in England. The reason none of the present 'Australia is wonderful' binge seems offensive is that it is mostly dry-humoured and lacks the love-it-or-leave-it menace you feel in the United States. When the great waves of immigrants landed here in the 1950s, they were not compelled to put their hand on their hearts, salute a flag, promise to bear arms and chant a catechism of devotion which by implication would denounce their origins. There were, in the beginning, slurs

of 'refos' and 'dagos', but most immigrants were treated with a curious Australian indifference which allowed them to build their lives in peace. I've often wondered if this wasn't really a seam of tolerance deep in a country where the majority have been at one time or another seeking refuge. The result is an optimism difficult to match these days in another Western country.

○

Bob Hawke has skilfully exploited this mood. He appears pop-up style at, it seems, almost every major public event, giddaying at multitudes of 'old mates'. Unfortunately his 'consensus politics' belies a continuing tragic and humiliating state of affairs for Australia. Since the states federated in 1901, *not* as an act of independence but as a show of fidelity to the Crown, Australian leaders with one exception – the overthrown Whitlam – have sought to reassure a 'protector', regardless of the price extracted in sovereignty.

A remarkable documentary, now showing in a Sydney cinema, reveals just how high a price Australia has paid for its politicians' lack of will and nerve to 'go it alone'. Called 'Allies', it is a relentless series of interviews with mostly former senior CIA men and their counterparts in the Australian spook shops, known as ASIS and ASIO. What emerges clearly is that Australia has allowed itself to be positioned in the front line of a prospective nuclear war *in Europe* – with its US satellite communications bases even more directly linked with triggering war than Greenham Common. Such 'good mates' are the ASIS support team that they even helped Washington overthrow Allende in Chile. Brian Toohey, editor of the *National Times* – and Australia's Woodward and Bernstein rolled into one – revealed that and much other surrogate murk, such as a camp for Australian CIA assassins. Toohey's front page headline read: 'Why this spy madness must stop'. Alas, will they read and heed it down on the beach?

○

PS from the beach: humpback whales passing down the east coast of Australia do not know the words of 'Waltzing Matilda.' But, says Dr Bill Dawbin of Sydney University, who has recorded their songs: 'They do sing in an Australian accent . . . please forgive me for saying so.'

ROGER WODDIS

Rough music

'She may not be the first violin, but she is still a leading player with the NATO orchestra.' – a Hungarian spokesman on Mrs Thatcher, who is visiting Budapest this week.

She may not be the first violin,
  Her skill is far too scanty:
She jumps ahead when joining in
  And cannot play *andante*.

Her strings are taut, her tone is shrill
  And hardly ever mellows;
Her bowing shows her iron will
  To rise above the cellos.

She burns to play a leading part,
  She could not live without it.
She claims to know the score by heart,
  Although the critics doubt it.

She may not be the first violin,
  But sitting in the middle
She amplifies the common din
  By playing second fiddle.

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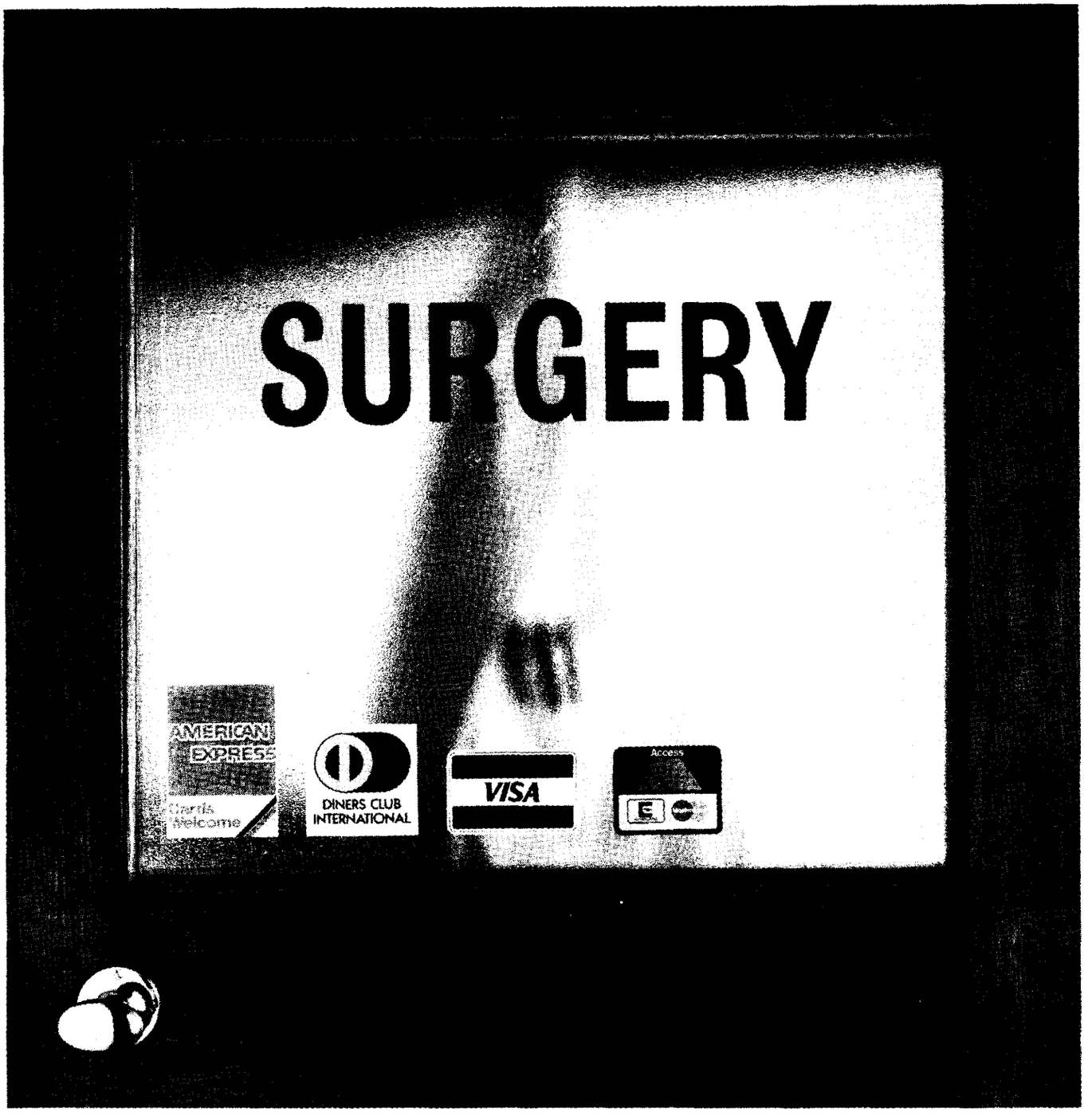

A sickening prospect.

During last year's General Election the Conservative Party gave a number of reassurances on the future of the Health Service. In the few months since then the Conservative Government has been far less reassuring.

For the first time ever Government policy is creating unemployment among Health Service doctors.

And as doctors and nurses join the dole queue, 750,000 people are still queuing in hospital waiting lists.

If you have the money, of course, you can jump the queue.

But if you believe that those in the greatest need should take priority, rather than those with the most money, you'll have just one chance in the next four years, to make your opinions felt.

On June 14th the elections to the European Parliament take place.

The Labour Party will be standing on policies that offer soundly based alternatives to the harsh inhumanities of Margaret Thatcher's brand of conservatism.

Alternatives to the 13 million unemployed in Europe, for example.

And alternative ways of running our Health Service, that don't involve running it down.

The Labour Party, along with other socialist parties in Europe, will be working to get these messages across.

If you'd like to help, begin by clipping the coupon.

To the EEC Campaign Unit, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.
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Ronnie takes to the trail again

President Reagan has finally declared his re-election campaign open. Claudia Wright reviews the record of his first term and makes predictions for the future, if he wins again

Washington

FOUR DAYS before President Reagan formally announced his candidacy for re-election, the Wall Street stockmarket was swept by a rumour that the President was not going to run again. The Dow Jones average dropped eleven points in an afternoon's trading.

The day *after* Mr Reagan made his intention clear, the market plummeted eight and a half points. Is it possible that at the heart of American capitalism there is a loss of nerve? Could it be that the brokers of America's investments suspect the reality of Mr Reagan's re-election to be as bad as the rumour of his retirement?

A broker of my acquaintance explained the continued decline on Wall Street as a symptom of Mr Reagan's success, rather than apprehension about his future. The confidence in economic recovery that the Administration has inspired has driven stock values so far upwards, he explained, that there are no bargain values left on the market; the post-depression buying boom of last year has drained investors of their liquid funds. Demand for stocks is falling because American capital is sated with its recent profit-taking.

If you are looking to balance the Reagan Administration's failures abroad with its success at home, you have it there. Mr Regan can appeal for re-election on the grounds, as he put it in his announcement, that 'things have changed'. On this proposition there is no one to disagree. However, only the severity of the deflationary policies of 1981-82 can make the recovery of 1983 and the slowdown expected in 1984 seem the stuff of which re-election victories are made. According to the standards by which Presidents have been judged since Franklin Roosevelt, no one can be confident of re-election when unemployment is running at its current level, and the real cost of money – the difference between the price inflation rate and interest rates – is as high as it will be this year.

In theory, the Democrats should be more confident than they are. Admittedly, they are preoccupied with an eight-way primary contest while the President is running unopposed, but it is possible that Walter Mondale will have eclipsed his opponents by April and will be able to use the remaining primaries as a platform to strike at Mr Reagan rather than to defeat his Democratic opponents. Time is also not moving in Mr Reagan's direction – by mid 1984 many of those who have been the short-term beneficiaries of the economic revival will be preoccupied with the economy's stagnation and will be inured to the President's optimism.

Concern about the size of the federal deficit shows up as the most important issue of the election among those who say they support the President – like Wall Street, they fear that Mr Reagan is driving interest rates too high. The polls show there is a general consensus that defence spending is now excessive, and general jitteriness that the 1983 economic improvements might be liquidated by another year or another term of Mr Reagan.

MR REAGAN's current strength in the polls is deceptive in two ways. First, the support for his past performance is considerably greater than for his re-election; Mr Reagan inspires fear for the future. Second, Mr Reagan's commanding lead in polls that match him against Mr Mondale and Senator John Glenn evaporates almost entirely when the polls ask the 'presidential choice' question after a series of others on current domestic and foreign policy issues. The more people begin to think about the issues, the closer Walter Mondale will come to defeating him.

The President's handlers understand this and for the early months of the campaign they will conduct two kinds of attack – one to overwhelm and intimidate the media into regarding the President as invulnerable and unbeatable; the other to identify and register to vote millions of their potential supporters. The registration blitz is designed to ensure that if the media falters, Mr Reagan can count on enough new white male voters to offset the Democratic registration drive targeted on blacks, Hispanics, unionists, and women under 40.

At this stage it is the media attack that is the more visible. From the White House viewpoint, nothing could have been more unfortunate than the death of a marine in Beirut during a firefight the day after the President announced his re-election campaign. The consequence of the marine's death – and of the marines killing several school children in their retaliation – was that the television news relegated the Reagan campaign to second or third place on the evening schedule and viewers only saw the President, who was boosting the Bible before a convention of Christian fundamentalists, after they had seen the deaths in Lebanon.

The connection between the two is precisely what Mr Reagan's media advisers and pollsters are trying to block. The level of importance Reagan voters appear to attribute to this issue is virtually identical to that given to it by Mondale voters.

This means that the President is vulnerable on both the economy and foreign policy among his nominal supporters. His vulnerability is even greater among the undecided which is where presidential campaigning really takes place. This is where the President's early media attack has to succeed, for if the press dares to show that politically speaking the President is trailing blood, he may lose the narrow margins from state to state, by which his 1980 victory was accomplished.

Mr Reagan may look a good campaigner when he is ahead in the polls, but if Mr Mondale should pass him, the President will run a poor race as an underdog. After all, he is more vulnerable than any of his predecessors. He cannot speak without notes or a teleprompter, he can't debate arms control continuously for three hours, he is incapable of getting economic facts or foreign factions correct, but all eight Democratic candidates have repeatedly shown that they can.

WHAT WILL Mr Reagan do if the race is close, and what will he do if he wins?

I have already suggested (*NS* 6 January) that, if by the summer Mr Reagan and his handlers fear defeat, they will prepare an 'October surprise' – in all likelihood, a dramatic military stroke which can produce a brief surge of popular support, like the 1983 Granada invasion. This possibility is widely understood, but so far unpublicised

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Rex Features

Candidate Reagan decides to play ball: ready . . . steady . . . go

in Washington. Democrat officials, like Charles Manatt, the party chairman, acknowledge their suspicions, but say it is too early to be talking publicly about an October surprise now.

The most probable target of such a move is Cuba – a place which even those voters who aren't sure which side the US is backing in Central America know well enough to hate. The most likely form a US move would take is a naval quarantine and a rhetorical ultimatum directed at the Cuban and Soviet leaders. Since our prediction, there have been fresh leaks from the Pentagon and the intelligence community. One claims that the Cubans have recently added a new frigate and submarine to their navy and three new MIG-23 fighter-bombers to their air force. Another claims that the USSR has been fitting a new nuclear cruise missile, the SS-N-21, on board its old Victor-class submarines and is storing the nuclear warheads for the missile at the Cuban base of Cienfuegos. The new missile is said to have a range of over 1,500 miles. The US leaks carry an official warning that these developments are flagrant breaches of the US-Soviet agreement which ended the 1962 Cuban missile crisis.

But what will he do if he is re-elected? In domestic terms, there is little macro-economic damage to be inflicted that the President has not already tried. To save his budget deficits from ballooning still further, he may begin to cut into those entitlements that are normally sacrosanct for politicians who want to run again – civilian and military pensions, medical payments, and the like.

The one Washington institution where the president will have an opportunity to do in a second term what he has not accomplished in his first is the Supreme Court. Mr Reagan's only appointment so far to the Court, Sandra Day O'Connor, has been as reactionary as might have been expected, if the justice's sex had not been an effective camouflage. With Court decisions increasingly settled by bitter 5-to-4 divisions on the bench, the possibility of several new Reagan appointments – five judges are 75 years of age or older, none of them particularly healthy – suggests that fundamental shifts may be in the offing in the areas of civil rights and free speech, in corporate and environmental regulation, and in the powers of the Presidency. No one should imagine that the Democratic Party in Congress would have the strength or the conviction to put up a credible fight on these issues.

In foreign policy, the President has double-crossed so many of his friends and allies that they have as much to be afraid of in a second term as his adversaries. After the tactics that the Administration has adopted towards the French, President Mitterrand must expect an intensified campaign of propaganda and economic destabilisation. If the Labour Party in Britain can recover to pose a serious threat to Prime Minister Thatcher at her next re-election try, more of the French medicine can be expected. It should become clear to Greece and Cyprus that they will continue to lose ground to the Turkish-American alliance. In the European Community as a whole, the frictions over trade subsidies, exchange rates and protection will mount unabated. There will be no greater sensitivity to European complaints in a second-term Reagan White House (or State Department) precisely because in the first term Mr Reagan learned there was no muscle behind it. For Europeans to pin their hopes on a return to power of Henry Kissinger as Secretary of State shows just how little Mr Reagan has to worry about across the Atlantic – at the moment, Donald Rumsfeld is in fact the more likely candidate to succeed George Shultz.

In the Middle East, the record shows that the Administration has double-crossed its friends – Jordan, Kuwait, Egypt, Algeria,and in minor ways Tunisia and Morocco – without significantly hurting adversaries like Libya and Syria. It betrayed its guarantees of the security of the Palestinians of Lebanon. Mr Reagan will also enjoy the historical distinction of being the first American President to make war against Arabs on Arab territory since the Tripolitanian War of 1803. That ended in two years – Mr Reagan's Levantine war may last much longer.

There is nonetheless a current of opinion among the pro-American Arab states that favours Mr Reagan's re-election. The reasoning is that second-term Presidents have traditionally been tougher on Israel, while Democrats like Mr Mondale are clearly more popular with Jewish voters, despite everything that Mr Reagan has done for Israel. The truth is that, so long as the friendly Arab states themselves do nothing to challenge Washington and dutifully purchase the US Treasury's debt, there is no telling the difference between Mr Reagan or Mr Mondale. Only a worsening Middle East crisis will show which of the two is capable of making an American-interest decision, rather than an Israel-first decision.

Until election day in November, the Druze and Shiites of Lebanon will make the distinction clearer to the American electorate than the Democratic Party dares to do. □

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MOZAMBIQUE

Too little, too late

Joseph Hanlon looks back on a man-made famine and the politics which delayed Western 'aid'

Maputo

TENS OF thousands of people starved to death unnecessarily in Mozambique last year. They were victims of miserly, bureaucratic and nervous western aid donors, and of South African destabilisation, in what was entirely a 'man-made' famine.

Aid agencies often complain that countries are slow to warn the world of impending disaster. In this case, Mozambique gave six months advance warning. But aid pledges actually decreased, and almost no food arrived in Mozambique while most of the victims were dying. Only when diplomats saw starving children with their own eyes, and when the United States gave a signal that aid was politically acceptable, did the donors move into action. By then, the worst was over.

The natural disaster which triggered the famine was the worst drought of the century, which affected much of southern Africa. In Inhambane and Gaza provinces in the south of Mozambique rainfall was less than half the normal rate for two years from December 1981. This meant that the 1981/82 crop was small, and the 1982/83 crop failed completely.

Drought is not a stranger in this zone. And in January 1983 when it was clear the rains had failed completely, the government issued an aid appeal, stressing the 'likely loss of the total 1982/83 crop in southern Mozambique'. It was a prompt warning, six months before the expected famine. Yet aid pledges decreased.

Finally, in late June Internal Trade Minister Aranda da Silva held a series of meetings with diplomats. He accused them of simply relabelling normal food aid and calling it drought relief and of being slow to deliver even that. 'There is hunger now,' he warned. 'If we do not receive more help, hundreds will die.' A week later, the International Red Cross reported on a visit to Vilanculos, in Inhambane, where randomly selected children were examined and many found to be severely malnourished. The report, which called the position 'alarming', was circulated to diplomats, but no extra aid was forthcoming.

One essential factor made this drought different from the previous one. In 1982 armed bands of the South African-organised Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) occupied the more sparsely populated parts of Gaza and Inhambane provinces. They stole their food from the local people, destroyed local grain stores and burned the already smaller crop in the fields.

South Africa's main goal with the MNR is to disrupt economic activity totally. The MNR destroyed 400 shops. Mozambique repeatedly appealed to western countries to put pressure on South Africa to ease off, but the appeals fell on deaf ears. At the height of the drought, in mid August 1983, the South Africans made an air drop to the main MNR base in southern Mozambique at Tome, Inhambane. It was not food relief for the thousands of people dying of starvation in the MNR-controlled area around Tome. It was a drop of nine tonnes of arms, ammunition, mines and tobacco for the bandit chiefs.

The magnitude of the crisis finally became clear in August. Peasants were running out of even roots and berries in the bush and risking their lives to flee from the MNR to Frelimo-controlled towns and main roads. A major offensive by the Mozambican army captured the Tome base and released a flood of refugees. Dozens of refugee villages were set up in Gaza and Inhambane. But armed MNR bands continued to attack the camps and relief lorries.

Anders Nilsson/AIM

Children at Inhassoro refugee centre in Inhambane province

Aid officials here are unanimous that many deaths in the camps could have been prevented if the international community had responded with food and medical assistance when it was first requested. But the war made the famine political. The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) responded to the appeal in January 1983 by helping with a feeding programme in Maputo province, which was safe, but they refused to work in the worse-affected Gaza and Inhambane regions. The WFP then obstructed the appeal in June 1983 on bureaucratic grounds.

For outsiders accustomed only to emotional aid appeals and pictures of hungry children, it is hard to appreciate how ponderous and petty aid bureaucracies can be. It can take more than a year for promised food actually to arrive. By then the disaster is often over, but in some cases donors insist that the food goes to the area where the disaster had been and the food is no longer needed, rather than to newly affected zones where it is urgently required.

The extended drought also created a seed crisis because peasants used up all their reserves. In June 1983, da Silva went out of his way to stress the need for seeds for the end-of-year planting in order to prevent another crisis. Few donors were able to respond in time. It took, for example, six months to bring seeds over the border from neighbouring Swaziland.

Some bureaucratic delays are inevitable, but those that occurred seemed largely political. Mozambique is a self-proclaimed Marxist state with explicitly socialist domestic policies. Despite its own attempts to be non-aligned, western countries dismiss it as 'pro-Soviet'. Furthermore, the Reagan administration policy of 'constructive engagement' with South Africa was seen as tacit US approval of South African attempts to destabilise Mozambique. Other western countries and supposedly neutral donor agencies like the WFP were reluctant to intervene, since food aid to Inhambane could be seen as taking sides.

Mozambique recognised this and throughout last year assiduously courted the United States. President Samora Machel made a much publicised visit to western Europe in October 1983. Convinced that the Marxist Machel was finally turning to the West, the Western powers jumped into action. The United States appointed an ambassador to Mozambique and doubled its food aid (to 43,000 tonnes of grain) and two countries on the Machel tour also gave big donations – 30,000 tonnes from Holland and 15,000 tonnes from Britain.

But the most important single influence was the visit to the famine area in early October of Jeff Millington, the First Secretary in the US embassy in Maputo. His grim report was widely circulated by the US government and was treated as a signal from the US that it was 'all right' to support Mozambique. It was this that galvanised the United Nations and other western donors into action. Diplomats and aid officials flocked to Inhambane and Gaza and sent shocked telegrams home. Planes were chartered to fly in aid that had been requested months before. Of course it helped, but by then the worst was over. □

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LEBANON

Still on the hook

Patrick Cockburn reports on the continuing stalemate

Tripoli

IN THE HILLS around Beirut both Druze militiamen and Lebanese army soldiers try to keep warm in the drenching winter rains. Sentries in long capes crouch over wood fires in old oil drums. In the mountains which rise over 10,000 feet straight above the Lebanese capital snow has blocked the only road to Damascus at the point where it enters the Syrian lines and fighting is reduced to sniping with an occasional artillery barrage; a contrast to the heavy shelling of east Beirut earlier in the month.

This does not lead to any optimism in the capital. The Lebanese, with only six hours electricity a day and a curfew which starts at 8 pm, are desparing more than ever. They expect the fighting to get worse; more specifically, they believe that the Lebanese army is going to attack the Druze soldiers on the ridge that overlooks Beirut from the east, or else move into the southern suburbs.

President Gemayel and his American backers are both relying on the Lebanese army, which US advisors are desperately training and re-equipping, to tip the balance of power in Lebanon in their favour. The alternative is for the Americans to leave and Gemayel to accept Syrian predominance. This would force the Lebanese government to abrogate the 17 May Lebanese-Israeli agreement, signed last year at the urging of US Secretary of State George Shultz but never implemented – a symbolic admission that Syria had regained the position in Lebanon that it enjoyed before the Israeli invasion in 1982.

The problem is that the Syrians and their allies see no reason to compromise. The balance of power in the country swung decisively in their favour last September, when the Israelis withdrew from the mountains above Beirut. Within a week the Druze under Wali Jumblatt had defeated the Christian militiamen and linked up with the Syrians.

In the four months since then, Beirut has been under a curious sort of siege. For all the publicity about the battles for the mountain town of Souq Al Gharb last September, its capture would have served no military purpose. The Druze already hold all the key positions on the ridge 3,000 feet above the capital and about eight miles from the centre of Beirut. From the Druze stronghold of Aley, Druze artillery observers can look down on every part of Beirut and control the fire of 400 guns and rocket launchers in the valleys and ravines behind them.

The other key position is a suburb of Beirut, Chauaifete, at the southern end of the same mountain ridge where it curls around to meet the sea. It is close to the airport and the bunkers of the 1,600 US Marines still on shore. Chouaifete is also the point at which the Druze militiamen link up with the southern suburbs of Beirut, which are the stronghold of the Shiah Moslems and some 3,000 of their militiamen belonging to Amal. Their arms and ammunition come via a dangerous, but still usable, military road known as the Chouaifete Gap.

It is a measure of the strength of Syria and Syrian allies in Lebanon that it is possible to drive all the way from Damascus to within two miles of the centre of Beirut without once travelling through territory which is under Lebanese government control. Gemayel himself admits that his administration holds only 10-15 per cent of Lebanon.

FAILING ANY NEW understanding with the Syrians – and all the signs are against one – the Lebanon army will probably try to break the blockade of Beirut sometime this spring. Its aim would be to take the southern suburbs, Chouaifete or the whole ridge line to the east. Training camps, mainly in the Christian enclave to the north of Beirut, are filled with recruits under training.

The plan is to create an army of 60,000 men in ten brigades. Three are ready for action now; a fourth is almost complete. This year alone the government will spend some $1 billion on new weapons, almost all American, on top of $1.2 billion last year. Most of this is in cash payments to the US since President Reagan does not dare ask Congress for either grants or credits for Lebanon.

If the army fails to change the balance of military power in Lebanon, or splits along sectarian lines (some 57 per cent of the army is Moslem), then President Gemayel and his backers in Washington will have few options left. They will have no recourse but to recognise Syrian predominance in Lebanon, north of the Israeli lines along the Awali River.

But this is exactly what President Amin Gemayel and the Christian community have tried so hard to avoid over the last year. Initially, they underestimated the danger. Even after the assassination of the previous president, Bashir Gemayel, in 1982, the government thought that it could rely on Israeli and American support against the Syrians. They failed, however, to conciliate the Moslem communities.

The key premise in the counter offensive by Syria and its allies is the calculation that neither Israel nor the US want a full-scale war against them. Syrian President Assad has the political and military strength to cope with anything less than that. The Israeli withdrawal from the Chouf Mountains in September showed they had largely abandoned their alliance with the Phalange party which dominates Christian politics in Lebanon.

The limits of American willingness to hold off Syria were exposed a month later in October when the White House did not retaliate against the 40,000 Syrian troops in Lebanon after the truck bomb killed 241 marines. Bellicose warnings from Caspar Weinberger and George Shultz only emphasised to the Lebanese that the Sixth Fleet offshore was a paper tiger.

Can the Lebanese army, possibly with the support of US naval guns offshore, do what Jerusalem and Washington have failed to do over the past year?

The risks of failure are high. The army is the only instrument of government in Beirut which is growing in strength. It could take the southern suburbs and possibly the ridge, though at the cost of heavy casualties on all sides. But this would mean a full-scale war in which Syria would have to give total support to its allies. On past experience, President Gemayel could not expect the same degree of US or Israeli backing.

The alternative is to accept that Lebanon is no longer a nation state, but a series of cantons or mini-states – each with its own private army and foreign allies. President Gemayel would continue to head a shaky central government in 'greater Beirut'; and Syria would continue to fight its proxy war against the Israelis and the Americans in the expectation that both will eventually leave. In the meantime, it is glad to have both of them on a hook. Nothing would be finally settled, but the protagonists would at least be able to put off a full-scale war for a few more years. □

THIS ENGLAND

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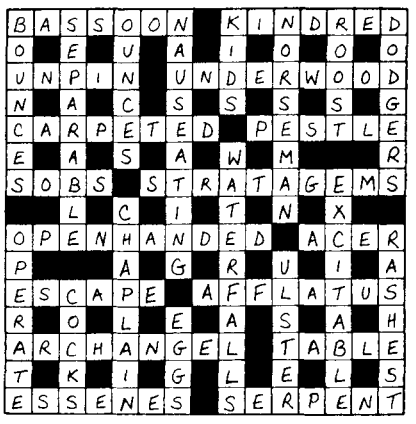
☐ Councillor Frank Badie, Conservative, commented it was a Tory government which had set up the new county councils. 'They didn't foresee that London would be taken over by lunatics who would support every moral deviance known to men,' he told the committee. – *Altrincham Guardian* (John F. L. Wood)

☐ Another good way of meeting men is to join a political party. You don't have to be deeply committed – there are enough men joining just to meet women. – *Cosmopolitan* (Julian Petley)

Solution to Crossword 1427



Prizewinners to 1427

J. Buxton (Chesterfield)
Mrs P. M. Hardiman (Richmond)
Miss N. Leggatt (Broadstairs)

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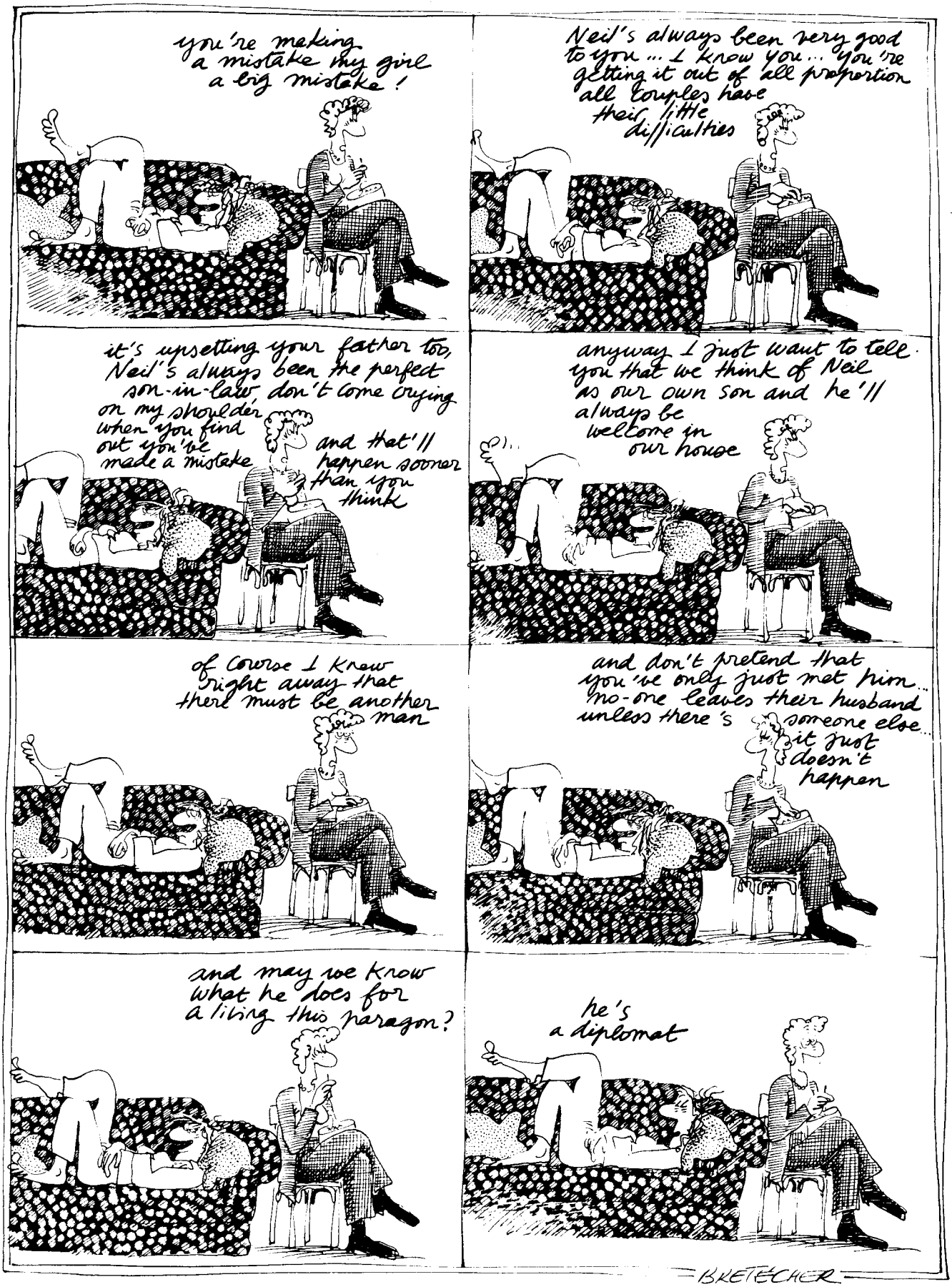
BRETECHER

LIKE MOTHER LIKE SON-IN-LAW


you're making a mistake my girl a big mistake!
Neil's always been very good to you... I know you... you're getting it out of all proportion all couples have their little difficulties
it's upsetting your father too, Neil's always been the perfect son-in-law don't come crying on my shoulder when you find out you've made a mistake
and that'll happen sooner than you think
anyway I just want to tell you that we think of Neil as our own son and he'll always be welcome in our house
of course I knew right away that there must be another man
and don't pretend that you've only just met him... no-one leaves their husband unless there's someone else... it just doesn't happen
and may we know what he does for a living this paragon?
he's a diplomat
BRETECHER

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LETTERS

What's in a name?

Tom Gallagher, School of Peace Studies, Bradford University

I was somewhat disturbed to notice that in your extensive coverage of the banning of Stokely Carmichael from entering this country, you did not dwell even for an instant on the new name he has adopted, Kwame Touré.

As you laconically stated, he took his adopted surname from Sekou Touré, President of Guinea since 1958, without mentioning that this man has one of the most atrocious human-rights records in the whole of Africa, as Amnesty International will verify. One of the many victims of his rule was Diallo Telli, former Secretary-General of the Organisation for African Unity who starved to death in the infamous Boiro prison in 1977.

That an aware and intelligent man like Carmichael is willing to adopt the name of this despot makes one suspect that he is motivated more by a liking for the cult of personality and by the somewhat nebulous concept of Pan African nationalism than by any commitment to socialist transformation of society, at least in a way that will ensure that the basic rights of the individual are respected.

Anti-imperialism is the *leit motiv* of the speech which you carried (*NS* 27 January). But this is not necessarily the same as socialism. In Guinea, Sekou Touré has successfully withstood the post-colonial embrace of France and many of his people are probably better off materially than in other West African countries. But the *Fuhrerprinzip* seems to be alive and well and the police state methods topped off by a cult of personality should be a warning to others, not a model.

With 1984 only one month old, it is disturbing that our own state can exclude a foreign visitor on very flimsy reasoning. In a year when socialism is being widely assailed as being neglectful of individual freedom, it was also rather unwise of the *New Statesman* not to ask in this one instance: What's in a name?

Anne Greenford, London SW2

The last third of Stokely Carmichael's 'plea for reason' clearly suggests violence. It is deplorable for America to export its forms of violence to Central America, the Middle East and with cruise. But if it is black, this is all right. Is this what you imply?

Setting poor black people against poor white people doesn't seem to fit in well with the aims of international socialism to me; nor is it worthy of Pan Africanism.

Canon balls

Alan Hurst, London NW3

Terry Eagleton (*NS* 27 January) repeatedly clobbers the 'high priests' and 'thought police' of the literary establishment for perpetuating an elitist canon. Surely the real arbiter of the canon is, and always has been, the common reader? That unobtrusive person, not this faction or that, will ensure that 50 years hence *Jane Eyre* will still be in the bookshops but *Lace* won't. And the extraordinary bitterness of Eagleton's review suggests that what he really wants is to usurp the supposed power and position of people he despises.

Twists and turns

Mark Harrison, Coventry

I read, with rising dismay and indignation, the nasty twists at the end of Anthony Barnett's article on the monarchy (*NS* 27 January). According to him the Communist Party sees Thatcher's escapades as 'fascistic' and is trying to build a 'national-popular bloc' against them. Within this bloc Eric Hobsbawm has already eagerly included the Alliance, and *Marxism Today* will shortly embrace the Royal Household.

But even Barnett must know that, just for the sake of a free laugh, he's charged each one of those points with a subtle distortion of reality adding inverted commas at the critical point to make it look authentic.

Hasn't Barnett thrown the baby out with the bathwater? Don't we need a popular alliance against Thatcherite encroachments on our liberties? Wasn't it easier to fight for our liberties when British politics were governed from the centre? And if the Queen espouses a multiracial, multicultural community, or if Lord Mountbatten spoke out against the first use of nuclear weapons and overkill, can't we acknowledge the fact without compromising our republican ideal?

Most of all I resent the smear on Eric Hobsbawm, who has done as much to help the Left diagnose its past and rethink its future as anyone at the *New Statesman* – if not more. Is the rethinking process so painful that we must reward its most original and thoughtful participants with vilification? Still, who needs real enemies when we can play sectarian games instead?

Rate reverie

D. Gold, London N4

Some of the leaders of inner London's Labour boroughs are now involved in protests against rate-capping. They must be living in dreamland, if they think that high rate increases this April will make their efforts more popular. Even many loyal Labour voters will ask that cuts in their standard of living imposed by Labour councils should stop. Islington council last year raised its rates by nearly 30 per cent. In the by-elections that followed Labour lost two out of three seats to the SDP.

Those hit hardest by rate increases are among the poorest in these boroughs. They have an income just high enough to make them ineligible for supplementary benefit, but low enough to get rent and rate rebates. Already the government is going to hit these families, by the measures planned to reduce housing benefits, but now Labour councils are going to hit them again with high rate increases. Inner London councillors must ask themselves if they were sent to the Town Halls by Labour voters to cut standards of living among these people. One alternative is a principled stand by resignation. But I doubt there are many George Lansburys among the professional groups who make up such a large proportion of the Labour councillors and whose incomes are very much higher than the average, in the poor inner city boroughs. They have no idea how the mass of people live.

Cock up at New Statesman?

Zuleika Dobson, Administrator, Arkwright Arts Trust, Camden Arts Centre, London NW1

I write with reference to John Spurling's review (*NS* 20 January) of *1984: an exhibition*.

Mr Spurling, like some other critics, appears to have misunderstood the purpose of the exhibition. We did not ask the ten contributing artists to illustrate Orwell's book but to take it, in any way they decided, as a departure point to express their personal fears and hopes – artistically and/or politically – for today, 1984.

John Spurling is of course entitled to his own opinion of our exhibition. However, I do take exception to the caption 'Cock up at Camden Arts Centre?' which accompanies the photograph at the beginning of the review. Although perhaps amusing to some, this caption, which is unexpected in a serious publication, got a cheap laugh at the expense of a deeply committed and talented artist.

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Nicholas Jacobs

In town B

Brecht in Context
JOHN WILLETT *Methuen* £12.50

This book consists principally of nine chapters on different aspects of Brecht, introduced by the autobiography of Willett's own involvement with him, to which are added reviews (published and unpublished) and notes and original jottings on the author's meetings with Brecht and his collaborators. Willett's attitude to the reader brings to mind Brecht's own Herr Keuner: 'Herr K. preferred town B to town A . . . "In town A they invited me in to dine; in B they invited me into the kitchen." ' The writing is informal but functional, as if the pleasure of the material were being shared with an interested friend.

It is striking to learn that we have Theodor Adorno to thank for Willett's first hearing of the original *Threepenny Opera* recording in the mid-Thirties. Willett gives a revealing analysis of Brecht's impact on him, identifying not only the aesthetic attraction but also the political appeal of Brecht's work, which he beautifully expresses as 'its sensitivity to the social factors linking political enemies'. The centrepiece of this chapter is the account (supplemented by notes set down at the time) of Willett's meeting with Brecht in June 1956 and what led to it, but it also records other memorable events, including Willett's over-optimistic attempt to interest Arthur Waley, whose Chinese translations Brecht so admired, in co-translating *The Good Person of Szechwan*.

Willett has a strong sense for the arcane, and the volume is spiced with odd facts and connections. Who else would be able to make apt use of Rudyard Kipling sending George V a batch of Edgar Wallace thrillers? Thus it was the curiosity of finding a P. G. Wodehouse quotation in Brecht's *Refugee Conversations* which alerted Willett to Brecht's quite special taste for certain British and American authors, from the Elizabethans to Wallace and Dorothy Sayers. Willett summarises Brecht's highly eclectic English-language reading and the use he made of it and also considers why, despite this clear one-way affinity, Brecht's reception here has been so patchy.

The outstanding piece in this extraordinarily rich volume, which uncannily succeeds in being packed but uncrowded, concerns Brecht and politics. In this Willett somehow contrives to discuss all the major turning-points – both personal and historical – Brecht lived through, and their ramifications for his work, from his pre-communist, almost pre-political early period to the very nearly post-political *Buckow Elegies* at the end. In addition he manages to include a concise discussion of Brecht and the Marxist literary debates in the Thirties. His account of the Brecht-Lukács/Modernism-Realism debate is unusual for its full understanding of Lukács's position, though he is a little hard on him in portraying him simply as the most intelligent Zhdanovite and bracketing him with the Nazi Alfred Rosenberg; even Brecht himself was more generous, constantly offering Lukács an olive branch, despite Lukács's profound inability to appreciate his work. But this is a masterly chapter, touching also on Brecht's Chinese interests and containing details of otherwise little-known associates and friends.

Besides chapters on Brecht and Expressionism (which is also about Brecht and the New Objectivity), on both of which movements Willett – the author of books on each – has much of interest to say, and on Brecht and the director Erwin Piscator (again the subject of a book by Willett), this volume contains three further major studies. A chapter on Brecht and the visual arts discusses the montage element in his work, describes the 'selective realism' of the immediately recognisable Brecht 'stage picture' and examines his relations with George Grosz, John Heartfield and the designer Caspar Neher. A piece on Brecht and the cinema contains accounts of the *Threepenny Opera* film, *Kuhle Wampe* and Brecht in and versus Hollywood. On all these Willett throws new light, quoting unpublished material and often cutting through years of unproductive theorising by the cineastes with a few simple facts or with a down-to-earth practical judgment. Finally 'Brecht and the musicians', besides telling the story of Brecht and his three major composers (Weill, Eisler and Dessau), and revealing that, surprisingly, Brecht once approached Carl Orff, shows the key role music played in his work and, in the case of the *Lehrstücke* (the learning plays), in the development of its form.

One of Brecht's most sadly unrealised projects was to adapt Kipling's 'The Elephant's Child' for young East Germans. This story of a young elephant – who asks what crocodiles have for dinner and gets spanked by its elders and betters for its 'satiable curiosity', then sets out to discover for itself and, by a painful process, acquires something which greatly enhances its life: namely a trunk, with which it not only picks bananas but spanks its elders and betters on getting home – was a highly significant and characteristic choice. Willett misses this, and his chapter on Brecht and Kipling, useful as it is, partially in summarising James Lyon's book on the subject (duly acknowledged), is sometimes guilty of an exaggerated *Quellenforschung* (search for sources) not too far removed from the German *Literaturwissenschaft* (lit. crit.) Willett

Camera Press

If the cap fits – Brecht in various contexts

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makes gentle fun of. But readers should not be put off this chapter which contains a suggestive analysis of the 'startling implications' of the similarities in the work of its very different subjects.

When Auden included Brecht ('the lyric poet') in his commonplace book *A Certain World*, we have Willett to thank for it. For Auden, who acknowledged the influence on him of pre-war Brecht, did not read his poems as they appeared in the Sixties. Willett finds this surprising, though it surely isn't in view of Auden's understated but ever more firmly held Christian beliefs, so incompatible with views such as Brecht's (so much so in fact that Auden, as Willett fascinatingly reveals, simply could not understand *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*'s key line, 'terrible is the temptation to goodness'). It is therefore greatly to the credit of all three men that the story of Auden and Brecht's initial mutual regard and then, in Auden's case, very bitter hostility should have had such a happy ending. Willett is uniquely placed to tell the story, having known them both, and he does so in intriguing detail, at the expense however of pointing out the very interesting similarities in some of their works. This chapter shows signs of being written some time ago, before Edward Mendelson's *Auden: Selected Poems* which contains brief but very perceptive remarks about the two, and before Lyon's *Brecht in America* which documents facts which Willett states as his own hunch.

When Brecht and his nearest male collaborator Hanns Eisler discussed each other's work, the greatest compliment they could pay was to say that a poem or musical setting was 'usable'. At a time when the image of Brecht has threatened to go stale, or is covered by slogans scrawled by false friends and enemies alike, which amount to 'Up/Down with the politicisation of art', one can only say that this book is usable in this exemplary sense. □

ESSAYS
Jon Cook

Reason and obsession

Lutheran Letters
PIER PAOLO PASOLINI tr. Stuart Hood *Carcanet* £8.95

Lutheran letters brings together some of the last pieces that Pasolini wrote before his murder by a male prostitute in 1975. They present a fascinating and disturbing convergence of obsession and reason. Pasolini's obsession is sexual, homoerotic, and its subject is his relation with the street boys of Rome and Naples. His reason draws its categories from Marxism and its subject is the changing relation between the forms of cultural, political and economic life in post-war Italy. Reason and obsession combine to make a repeated statement about the character of contemporary Italian society, which, according to Pasolini, has been overtaken by something close to a catastrophe, the catastrophe of consumer capitalism. This new power manifests itself in various ways: 'enormous quantities, superfluous goods, a hedonistic function'. Its offer of abundance is deceitful, however, because, in reality, it destroys life, whether that life is embodied in the natural environment, in the physical appearance of Pasolini's beloved young men or in an active popular culture. In particular, the destruction of this last is felt as the most painful loss, the one to which the others can be connected.

This is not because Pasolini sees the traditional, extinct, popular culture of Italy, or, more precisely, of some of its regions and cities, as the vehicle of socialist or radical values. As he acknowledges, its norms were of 'a religous and paternalistic nature'. Nor does he pretend that it was, for much of the time, anything more than a subordinate culture. Instead, its value is more subtly and elusively located than most mythologies of popular culture would suggest. This value emerges by virtue of what has replaced it, the homogenous power of consumerism, which has, within a generation, drawn into its ambience an amalgam of proletarian, sub-proletarian and peasant groups. In the process a large and amorphous class of more or less frustrated bourgeois consumers has been created, whose ideals are in pleasure, sensation and the imitation of the wealthy, and whose frustrations vent themselves in sadistic crime and drug-taking. What has been lost is precisely something *different* from this bourgeois culture of consumption, and what this means for Pasolini is a loss not so much in what can be explicitly stated as a value but in a capacity for self-definition and the regulation of a meaning which is not simply in the interests of the powers-that-be. Bound by the compulsion to consume, the subordinate classes are neither respected nor feared by their rulers but managed in an irresponsible and destructive way. This is a tragic fact because it means the destruction of various seed-beds for an alternative to capitalism and because the very triumph of commodity consumption exposes the weaknesses of traditional political and popular cultures which could not find the resources either to resist or to regulate its power.

Evidently a gloomy picture, and there are various means of distancing or denying it close at hand. Pasolini's argument can be understood as a peculiarly exacerbated version of the embourgeoisement thesis – the argument that as workers become more affluent they lose their radicalism – and this has been around long enough for us all to forget it. Or *Lutheran Letters* can be read as little more than the rationalisation of Pasolini's disturbed sexuality: the well-to-do intellectual who once found sexual pleasure with working-class youth now finds himself rejected or humiliated and then projects his own loss as the loss of his national culture. Or a more insidious and chauvinistic response takes over. At his own repeated insistence, Pasolini writes about the specificity of Italian life and culture and we all know that, whatever their strong points, the Italians couldn't run a play-group let alone a national government if they tried. After all, what do we hear in Pasolini's book but the written equivalent of voices typically raised in an endless and hysterical public debate which will never get anywhere because it's in the interests of its participants that it should never end.

I doubt that any of these responses can be sustained. Whatever the differences in the tone of public debate, Pasolini's Italy of 1975 anticipates Thatcher's Britain: an irresponsible government swayed by the interests of the multi-nationals and finance capital, a denial of the future, a lack of compassion, the destruction of the environment. The list of similarities could be extended, despite Pasolini's sense that Britain is one of the capitalist states whose history has better prepared it than Italy for the effects of consumerism. As for Pasolini's homoerotic passion, *Lutheran Letters* does not suggest a rationalisation so much as a

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risk undertaken, a willingness to use the delicate register of desire as a way of comprehending a language of bodies and objects which cannot be arrived at by other, more conventionally rational means. When this connects with Pasolini's strenuous immersion in an Italian tradition of reflection on the nature of good government, the legacy of Machiavelli and Gramsci, the effect is a rare kind of moral grandeur. Pasolini's disgust with the nature of contemporary Italian society is so intense and sustained that he can afford little if any political comfort, least of all in the 'historic compromise' between the Italian Communist Party and the ruling Christian Democratic élite. *Lutheran Letters* shows Pasolini trying to sustain a mode of thought and perception which will resist the tyranny of consumerism without falling prey to the attraction of terrorist violence. The pathetic irony is that this very effort was destroyed by the new criminality whose sources Pasolini so acutely described. □

FICTION
Angela McRobbie

Mutterings

La Regenta
LEOPOLDO ALAS
Allen Lane £14.95 *Penguin* £8.95
The Coffin Tree
WENDY LAW-YONE *Cape* £8.50

Written in 1884 by the Spanish critic and journalist Leopoldo Alas and only now translated into English, **La Regenta** is presented in this edition as something of a masterpiece in the classic 19th-century realist style. Apparently, it has always been castigated for its similarities with *Madame Bovary* and it's true that its heroine, Ana Ozores, is not altogether unlike Emma. She is the wife of the local judge: a smug, complacent man, who prides himself on Ana's beauty but is basically happy to let her rot as long as she doesn't shame him. When, eventually, he stumbles on her infidelity, he is out there waving his pistol. How dare she? And her a devout and virtuous Catholic?

Not that Ana has been easy prey to the philanderer Mesio. She submits to him only when she has lost faith in everything else. Until then, her escape route has been through the church. While Mesio was carefully plotting his seduction, she was trapped, partly through her naiveté, but also through her petit-bourgeois materialism, in the clammy, arid atmosphere of provincial Vetusta. And, as her spirit and intelligence turn in upon themselves, she becomes a mystic and religious fanatic. Her soul-mate on this voyage inwards is her confessor, the grotesque and leering Canon, Don Fermin.

In fact, the greater part of this 700-page novel is given over to the dramatic play between these two figures. He, a hypocritical and sanctimonious arch-voyeur, sets out systematically to break her spirit. He does this by offering her religious, or otherworldly pleasures – thus making his power synonymous with her gratification. A clever strategy, because the eternal interplay between self-scrutiny and bodily temptation (the sins of the flesh) leads Ana to nothing but mental and physical self-flagellation. So wracked is she that she cannot for the life of her see the wild temptations which temper the perverse piety of the Canon himself. As he puts it: 'If I had to confess my sins to her . . . How they would disgust her.'

This man is also a spy and has installed in his church tower a panopticon, so that he can survey the private lives of his parishioners as they drink themselves stupid in the Gentlemen's Club, or stroll adulterously in their gardens. But, in this surreptitious looking, he is not alone. It seems to be one of the dominant forms of sexual gratification in the town. The women speculate on how long their friends spend in the confessional and why, while the priests don disguises to spy on the truanting seminarists who spend illicit nights in the theatre. The Canon makes his bid for power by winning the women of the parish away from the clutches of men. He offers them, instead, the bosom of the church, the religious body presumably being preferable to the physical one. In this role he presides over girls' groups and mothers' organisations. Here, the sexual atmospherics are almost tangible; everything is, by definition, unavailable – the body of Christ, the arms of Our Lady and, of course, the Canon himself.

It should be obvious by now that *La Regenta* has more in common with Buñuellian surrealism than with standard literary realism. Its author employs dreams, visions and fantasies – spoilt only by their continued indulgence in sadism against the book's women – to explode the presumption of clerics, who are ever anxious to offer advice on issues as trivial as how to dance without inviting moral danger. 'The archpriest spoke in good faith, forgetting that he had only ever danced with the occasional chair.' But the symbolic heart of the novel is the darkened space of the confessional. Here, religion is confronted with sexual trespass, hypocrisy with devotion and celibacy with temptation. The confessional is guilty from the start. It is warm with the odours of the invisible man who listens and hands out penances. His mutterings are heard, but his response is veiled.

La Regenta is replete with perversity and satire. So much so that it gets caught up in the tantalising web of both. This stops it from becoming anything more than a grotesque and sometimes funny caricature. The temptations seem to be too strong for even the author to resist them and he ends up helplessly cataloguing the deviations, leaving Ana finally to pay for her sins by being kissed by some slimy unknown person who tastes like a frog. I read this novel, quite literally, between the extracts from Greer's forthcoming *Sex and Destiny* and *The Thorn Birds*. All three seemed to be saying the same startling thing: that no sex makes for more eroticism, and that Catholicism happily presides between the two.

Catholicism makes a fleeting appearance in **The Coffin Tree,** this time as a form of straightforward tyranny. An 11-year-old Burmese girl vows to get vengeance on the nun who punishes her for daring to have dirty thoughts at such a tender age. Like *La Regenta*, it is not a book which dazzles the reader with its writing. Its importance is slight, but nonetheless significant, if only because it documents the other side of the immigrant experience. Not so much the public fight to transcend the daily humiliations of racism, but the slide into private helplessness, then into private madness. The novel traces the forced exile of a brother and sister from their native Burma to the United States. The once-strong brother is overcome by fear, desperation, poverty. He dies, leaving his sister to fight against her own breakdown and incarceration in a mental hospital. Only here can she summon up the strength to face the future. *The Coffin Tree* suggests that we listen to the silences of black people's experiences as much as we are slowly beginning to listen to their voices. □

HISTORY
Alun Howkins

Rethinking

Languages of Class: Studies in English Working-Class History 1832-1982
GARETH STEDMAN JONES
Cambridge £22.50 & £6.95

Since the late 1960s Gareth Stedman Jones has occupied an important place within the British Left. As an editor of *New Left Review* , as well as a member of the editorial collective of *History Workshop Journal*, he has played a major part in shaping the preoccupations of a generation of historians. His *Outcast London* (soon to be reprinted) stands as one of the few studies from any political perspective which genuinely looks at the relationship between classes rather than treating them in isolation. Finally, and perhaps most fundamentally for historians of the Left, his long-term interest in the theoretical development of Marxism introduced many of us to the ideas of the post-1956 European, and especially French, Left.

As Stedman Jones himself says, this collection of essays, written in the period 1973-1982, could easily have been simply of biographical interest. This is not the case. The essays manage well their stated intention to 'suggest how the growing explanatory ambition of social history led to an increasing awareness of its limits as a self-sufficient form of historical interpretation'.

This increasing awareness is seen by Stedman Jones as a move from an unhappiness with the mid-Sixties attempts to combine empirical studies, especially of the working-class movement, with some form of Marxist theory, via the complex theoretical systems

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arising from the work of Louis Althusser, to a new synthesis based on a reappraisal of the work of Saussure. It is this last development which is probably the most controversial and forms the central thrust of argument in the two most recent essays in the book.

The argument is probably best shown in the article 'Rethinking Chartism'. In this, Stedman Jones addresses the fact that, while most historians of Chartism, especially in those studies of the 1960s and 1970s which were based on local or sectional groupings, have concentrated on its social existence, the Chartists themselves appear to have had a much more central and political view of the movement. As R. G. Gammage, an old-Chartist, wrote in 1854, 'exclusion from political power is the cause of our social anomalies'. Stedman Jones argues that one cannot simply abandon the Chartists' political conception because it is inconvenient or difficult. The central demand is to analyse what the Chartists themselves said. What emerges is a 'discursive' account of the movement, 'which attempts to identify and situate the place of language and form, and which resists the temptation to collapse questions posed by the form of Chartism into questions of assumed substance'.

What emerges is not the first working-class party but the last manifestation of the old political radical tradition: a mass movement unified by a central rhetoric about political power and corruption. Crucial to that mass movement was the increasing state activity in the 1830s. The Whig state of the Poor Law, the new police and *laissez faire* were constituted as the 'high road to tyranny'. Only a political perspective could allow for real intervention at the source of these evils – the House of Commons.

This summary of a complex argument is by its nature unsatisfactory but what is central is the method. Stedman Jones argues that, in the past, a notion of consciousness has been drawn unproblematically from 'being' or 'experience' without articulating precisely how such a process might work. The form of Chartism was radicalism and that form cannot simply be drawn from social being since it predated the social being of the 1830s; 'abstractly, the matter determines the possibility of the form, but the form conditions the development of the matter'.

To me, and I suspect others, this appears as a rejection of Marxism, classic or otherwise, since it implies at least a determinant reality to form (here language). In a sense this is unfair, but what is certain is that there is here a dialogue with Marxism rather than an acceptance of its premises. 'It is not a question of replacing a social interpretation by a linguistic interpretation, but it's rather how the two relate that must be rethought.' Similar arguments could be made in regard to the essay on the Labour Party in which Stedman Jones addresses the question raised by Hobsbawm and others about the future of Labour. In essence he argues that Labour's failures (and successes) are not so much a result of social and economic trends within British society, although these are clearly important, as the effective articulation of these changes through political discourse and practice. Thus Labour's history is not so much an inevitable 'forward march', halted by recent social trends, as a series of 'conjunctures' in which specific forms of success were achieved.

The other essays in the volume – on John Foster's book *Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution;* on the notion of social control; and the very important article on popular culture and the London working class 1870-1900 – would all be worthy of discussion if space allowed. It is good to have these important essays republished in an accessible and relatively cheap form which makes them available to an audience outside the readers of academic publications. They will raise temperatures on Left and Right. I only hope that the genuine spirit of argument which is present in them is taken in the way the author clearly means it to be, for, as he says at the end of his introduction, 'if history is to renew itself . . . it can only be by an engagement with the contemporary intellectual terrain – not to counter a threat, but to discover an opportunity'. □

PSYCHOLOGY
Marion Glastonbury

Minding baby

War in the Nursery: Theories of the Child and the Mother
DENISE RILEY *Virago* £5.50

In January 1944, the editor of the *British Medical Journal* devoted a leading article to the turbulent impulses of infancy in the midst of international conflict, surmising that each might prolong and exacerbate the other. Adopting his headline as her title, Denise Riley reflects that the intervening years of scientific and philosophical speculation have done little to clarify the relation between psychology and politics. Some experts prove influential. At a propitious moment, their ideas reach laymen, shift public opinion, modify social policy – who knows how? Not, apparently, socialists or feminists whose notion of coercive official propaganda is usually too vague or too simple to fit the facts. Yet, as critics of the existing order, they have good reason to distrust prevailing orthodoxies and a pressing need to understand how they work.

The author endearingly assumes that all her readers are radicals in search of a valid conceptual framework for the investigation of the embodied mind. Faced with interpretations of human behaviour based on false dichotomies – nature or society, instinct or conditioning, heredity or habitat – we tend to espouse cultural explanations for fear of falling into the reductive clutches of biological determinism. Paradoxically, this leads us to ignore the material reality of our physical experience: the successive exigencies of a varied life-span, the effects of labour and nutrition, the irreducible importance of gender, sexuality, reproduction, disabilities, pain: the sense in which, in a given power structure, it may truly be said that Anatomy is Destiny.

Having cogently outlined the proper scope of a demystified account of human growth, Riley examines previous attempts. Charles Darwin was one of several Victorian fathers who charted the progress of their own offspring in the belief, handy for a colonial nation, that the individual recapitulated the evolution of the race. Hints on how to handle primitive peoples were later sought by the government agencies who funded child-rearing studies by Erikson among the Sioux and Margaret Mead in Oceania.

While measurement, testing and training preoccupied the pioneers of applied psychology, psychoanalytic approaches to the family were boosted in America by the arrival of European practitioners exiled by fascism and, accordingly, eager to trace the genesis of the authoritarian personality. In mid-century Britain, however, the dominant view of character-formation turned out to be that of Melanie Klein whose legacy can be seen in the widely disseminated thoughts of Susan Isaacs, D. W. Winnicott and John Bowlby.

A century of debate and divergence in the mental sciences is summarised with brilliant lucidity in this concentrated history of origins and impacts. Then Riley embarks on a detailed survey of ideology in action, focusing on the administrative fate of women and children during and after the Second World War. Policies of female recruitment and nursery provision 'for the duration' were reversed in the ensuing peace. The author (herself a product of the demographic Bulge) argues that the government's pronatalist campaign not only promoted the myth of the unified and homogeneous family at women's expense, but also divided housewives from their employed sisters by 'the fixing and freezing of the Mother as a social category'.

Although post-war mother-worship may strike us in retrospect as retrograde cant designed to nail our forebears to the sink, it also represented a belated victory for reformers such as Margaret Llewellyn Davies and Margery Spring Rice who had had great difficulty in persuading policy-makers to acknowledge the existence, let alone the welfare needs, of uninsured wives. The memory of their pre-war testimony, the haemorrhage of submerged lives, suggests that a long perspective is required to evaluate the ironies of historical advance. Good causes may be furthered for the worst of motives: witness Marie Stopes and her eugenicist aims.

For socialists, the lesson of this original and inspiring book seems to me to be summed up (give or take a couple of prefixes) in William Morris's advocacy of perseverance: 'I pondered all these things and how [wo]men fight and lose the battle, and the thing that they fought for comes about in spite of their defeat, and, when it comes turns out not to be what they meant, and other [wo]men have to fight for what they meant under another name.' □

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The Life of Dashiell Hammett
DIANE JOHNSON *Chatto* £12.95
Dashiell Hammett: A Life at the Edge
WILLIAM F. NOLAN *Arthur Barker* £9.95

The central facts of Hammett's life are reproduced by both biographers. Discrepancies appear, however, through their different handling of particulars. Hammett was a secretive man given to embroidering his past, especially his service with Pinkerton's, while Lilian Hellman has – or so claims Richard Layman, Hammett's first biographer (*Shadow Man*, 1981) – developed 'a clouded personal image of the man'. Certainly, in her autobiographies and elsewhere, she preserves various of Hammett's untrustworthy tales and adds embroidery of her own. Consequently, telling fact from fiction is problematic. Hellman has refused to co-operate in the preparation of any biography except Diane Johnson's authorised version. Accordingly, one might expect Johnson's Hammett to draw heavily on the image jointly created by Hellman and the subject himself, with William F. Nolan's portrayal supplying a necessary anti-myth.

Exactly the reverse applies. Nolan accepts every tale as gospel, even ones he knows to have been persuasively controverted by Layman; Johnson tends to be more sceptical (though not so overtly as Layman). Johnson also inclines less than Nolan towards placing Hammett in a favourable light. This reliability apart, though, there is little praiseworthy about her book. Throughout, a fragmentary narrative, padded by copious quotation, skims over events instead of exploring them, while Hammett's work is barely discussed. Hellman's co-operation has yielded no mine of information about her relationship with Hammett, and Johnson admits that she ventures 'very seldom into this preserve'. Only in the thorough examination of the legal issues surrounding Hammett's gaoling – not quite an act of McCarthyite persecution after all – does she achieve the standard expected of a supposedly definitive work. Taken together – Johnson supplementing and correcting Nolan's fuller account – these books might constitute an adequate biography. Layman's though, while far from perfect, is a better one.

David Montrose

The Politics of Transport
ENID WISTRICH *Longman* £4.25

By far the best book on transport history is Philip Bagwell's *The Transport Revolution from 1770* (Batsford, 1974). Its only drawback is that it stops in 1970. Even so I find myself constantly dipping into it, to check either my memory or events that happened before I was born (which was somewhat before 1970). *The Politics of Transport* nicely fills the gap between Bagwell and 1983.

Wistrich is well-qualified to write this instant history. She is a lecturer in public administration and was intimately involved with events in the late 1970s when she was vice-chair of the Labour GLC's transport committee. The book is largely a political analysis of the various institutions in transport, from the Department of Transport to the pressure groups, and the effect they have on policy. In the process she tells some of the more controversial stories of recent years, such as the Archway Road inquiry, the fight over the motorway box and the Third London Airport.

One of my favourite tales is of the leak of the 'Peeler Memorandum' in 1978, not the least because I played a part in it. This memorandum (which was strictly speaking a minute) was written by a senior civil servant, one Joseph Peeler, in the Department of Transport. He advocated setting up an inquiry into the consequences of allowing heavier lorries on the roads. He said the inquiry should be rigged (a word which he used in the minute) to produce the right answer, which in his view was a heavier lorry.

The Politics of Transport offers an intriguing footnote on the copyright of leaks with the following acknowledgement: 'We are indebted to Transport 200 Ltd for permission to reproduce extracts from the Peeler Memorandum . . .'

Mick Hamer

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PENNY STRANGE *Peace News/Mushroom Books* 95p

The Greenham campaign has been hailed as a vital new impetus for the women's movement in this country. It has certainly attracted many women who would otherwise have had no contact with feminism, and whose ideas are thus being changed quite profoundly. But many feminists are uneasy that Greenham is being held up as a fresh focus for their struggle, and their disquiet is now voiced in *Breaching the Peace*.

This collection of essays challenges the 'holy status' of the women's peace movement, and makes these uncomfortable points: the success of Greenham depends largely on a reactionary image of women as mothers, carers and peace lovers; in the face of imminent death, which Greenham emphasises constantly, 'feminism can be portrayed by some as a self-indulgent luxury, and thus dismissed as a political white elephant'; and, finally, the first wave of militant feminism this century, which arose in the 1900s, was coopted into the anti-war struggle of 1914 and disappeared completely soon after. Will the same thing happen with Greenham?

The pamphlet criticises above all a lack of analysis around the peace movement, which applies as much to CND as to Greenham. What is the definition of 'peace'? What 'peace' would there be for women, even if we *did* eradicate nuclear weapons?

The vital ingredient in single-issue campaigns, and the one most usually missing, is that of making connections. In Penny Strange's Peace News pamphlet she does just that, saying that 'all who oppose violence must take seriously the daily violence against women . . . all who work for peace must uproot from their own lives the sexual dominance and hierarchical thinking that breed wars'.

Many Greenham women *do* make those connections, but the male media image shuts them out again. When mothers hang teddy bears on the fence, then all of Britain smiles. When there is suspicion of lesbianism in the camp, then the foot of convention comes firmly down. So how can the message be put across? How can those links be made? That is the question posed succinctly by these two pamphlets, and it highlights a deadly serious problem in contemporary radical politics.

Barney Bardsley

Reith: The BBC Years
ROGER MILNER *Mainstream* £9.95

This is a character portrait, drawn from his own voluminous diaries, of the man who not only founded the BBC, but built it in his own image. Reith's beliefs and principles became those of the BBC. He was a formidable personality: assiduous, forthright, passionately devout, emotionally immature; he suffered no fools and made enemies almost as easily as he inspired loyalty. His benevolent dictatorship at the BBC won the admiration of many and the allegiance of the majority of his staff. He alienated politicians, who wanted to use this new medium to influence public opinion, and BBC governors, who liked to observe the bureaucratic niceties which he despised, with equal facility. When he quit the BBC in 1938, he discovered that few had any use for an administrator of great shrewdness and vision and unshakeable principle, who had refused to scratch backs when he had every opportunity. Though he briefly held a Cabinet post during the war, his hopes of leading the nation as imperiously as he had led the BBC remained unfulfilled.

Reith would have applauded the single-mindedness with which the author pursues his aim of presenting a character study; critical events of the period – the General Strike, the Abdication – are described merely as they affected him. What he would not have applauded is the slipshod production of this book. Punctuation errors abound. The index, unfortunately, is a farce, since the indexer has clearly worked from different page numbers to the reader's. It's a shame because this is otherwise a very effective, very readable portrait of a very singular man.

Bob Woffinden

Poetry and Metamorphosis
CHARLES TOMLINSON *Cambridge* £9.95

Translation, metamorphosis, metempsychosis; Homeric Greek into Augustan English, Baucis into a tree, the spirit of Ovid transmigrating into John Dryden, Odysseus re-emerging in Leopold Bloom – such are the regenerative transformations that occupy Charles Tomlinson in the text of his 1982 Clark lectures.

The book is in part an exploration into the impact of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* on English poetry, in part a study of the idea of great translation being an act of Ovidian metamorphosis in itself. Given the slippery, protean nature of the subject matter, it is not surprising that these lectures attain a fluidity of cross-reference, among the cultural monuments of several millennia, that becomes at times just a little too rapid to follow. On the whole, though, Tomlinson's appraisal of the series of transmutations running through our literature is clear, as well as highly sensitive.

Baucis and Philemon and the savage tale of Tereus, Progne and Philomela are the points of departure from which Tomlinson discusses the superlative translation skills of the contributors to Garth's *Ovid* (principally Dryden); the preoccupation of Eliot with the Tereus/Philomela tale (explicitly in 'The Wasteland' and implicitly in his general obsession with speechlessness and birdsong); the immense significance of human/tree transformations to Pound . . .

The scope and erudition are impressive. One may not share his elevation of Dryden over Golding as Ovid's greatest reincarnation, for instance, but here, as throughout, Tomlinson provides arguments that are as stimulating to disagree with as they are when they convince.

James Lasdun

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JAZZ
Charles Fox

Local colour

Surman: apparently casual yet perfectly contrived

John Surman Brass Project
Bloomsbury Theatre

The earliest decades of British jazz witnessed a remarkable devotion on the part of the musicians to American moods and mores, including the virtual adoption of American states and cities. So Chicago, the Swanee river, even the remoter hamlets of a chimerical Dixieland, were preferred when it came to naming tunes or bands to such nearby spots as Clitheroe or Bishop's Stortford. True, Spike Hughes, at the start of the 1930s, got round to celebrating a Chelsea pub ('Six Bells stampede') and a chunk of his father's homeland ('Donegal cradle song'). But it was, paradoxically, left to visiting Americans to put – in the most literal sense – Britain on the jazz map. Those efforts included Duke Ellington's 'Hyde Park', Benny Carter's 'Swingin' at Maida Vale', Danny Polo's 'Stratton Street strut', and, by far the fullest in scope, Fats Waller's *London Suite*, embracing, among other purlieus, Soho, Bond Street and Whitechapel.

But aesthetic confidence brought geographical courage, even a taste for the literary connection. Mike Westbrook roved through William Blake's London, Stan Tracey ventured into Dylan Thomas's Wales. And the second half of this concert by John Surman's Brass Project was largely taken up by Surman's *Wessex Collection*, built around places, people and incidents in the novels of Thomas Hardy. (Characteristically, an American actually got to Wessex first; Bill Russo's 'Egdon Heath' – not, naturally enough, to be confused with Holst's – was recorded by Stan Kenton's Orchestra as long ago as 1954). Surman, very typically, assured his audience that they still needed to read the books. Earlier on, he had also pointed out that it was the Englishness of Hardy that appealed to him. And in their different ways, the two men do share – Hardy as a Dorset-born writer, Surman from Devon as soloist on baritone and soprano saxophones and bass clarinet – a liking for quirkiness, the kind of detail that lends veracity to emotion.

It was, just to boast for a moment, in the *NS* – in 1967 – that John Surman was first hailed as a baritone saxophonist of world class, capable of taking his place alongside Harry Carney, Serge Chaloff and Gerry Mulligan. What was not quite so obvious then was the extent of his commitment to a composer's strategy. Immediacy is still to the fore in Surman's musical thinking (half-an-hour before his concert he was breezily uncertain about which instrument he would use for some of the solos). Yet the shaping of a piece, the consideration of texture and tone as well as narrative reflect an instinct for a wider permanence.

Surman's real discovery of himself as a composer came early in the 1970s, following a period when, for about a year, he ceased playing altogether. Up to then he had been an incessant sitter-in, blowing alongside musicians of every style and calibre. On his LP, *Westering Home*, however, he used multi-tracking to construct pieces that worked as genuine compositions rather than variations on a theme. Soon afterwards he began experimenting with a synthesizer, a device many jazz musicians still look at very leerily, then went on to use other electronic aids: the echoplex, for example, which allows a soloist to duet immediately with something he has only just played.

The echoplex, although not the synthesizer, turned up at this concert, notably during the introduction to 'Space', where Surman twittered on a sopranino recorder. Elsewhere he performed on his three main instruments, but often poised against a choir of brass (three trumpets, four trombones) that provided harmonic continuity and could also skirmish in its own right. A good deal, although by no means all, of the writing for brass was done by John Warren, an old friend and colleague of Surman's, who also conducted when the occasion demanded it. One piece by Warren, 'Landlocked', began lazily, impressionistically, then bounded at a faster pace, some passages sounding very reminiscent of Gil Evans's more bravura manner. But it was frequently the more economical effects that proved most memorable. For instance, the bright colourings of 'For H', heraldic yet stealthy, the second of two pieces (the other was 'The silent lake') honouring the memory of the South African bassist, Harry Miller, who died in Holland just before Christmas.

Every bit as vital as Surman's collaboration with John Warren seems to be his playing relationship with the bassist Chris Laurence. Again and again the pair of them were heard in duets, apparently casual yet perfectly contrived. One small triumph of subtlety was the way Surman's bass clarinet, gurgling exultantly, and Laurence's bass transformed the atmospheric 'Space' into a high-flying twelve-bar blues, 'For a little bit less'. Surman's baritone saxophone was perhaps heard at its best toying with the melody of 'Tomorrow's yesterday', a piece with chord changes uncommonly like those in 'What's new?'. Other soloists often performed well – Kenny Wheeler's trumpet solos were especially vivid and exciting – but could have done with being embedded more securely within an orchestral context.

Most successful of the pieces were those which made up the *Wessex Collection*, sometimes involving a genuine folk song ('Go from my window'), always rooted in the kind of melodiousness which traditionally mirrors the countryside. Surman has recorded 'Tess' already (on an ECM LP by Miroslav Vitous) yet without quite capturing the mood of distraught passion summoned up by his soprano saxophone playing here. John Warren's arrangement of 'The Mellstock Quire' made ripe use of the quartet of trombones. Even more bucolic in atmosphere was 'Tantrum Clangley', a village, as Hardy points out, 'long celebrated for the skill of its inhabitants on instruments of

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percussion'.

The Brass Project's tour on the Arts Council's Contemporary Music Network is still under way: at Manchester's Band on the Wall this Thursday (2 February), in Leicester on Saturday (4), Southampton (6), Worcester (7) and Bristol (8). What Hardy would have thought of it all simply cannot be imagined. But one of his characters, William Dewy, violoncellist and bassist in the Mellstock Quire, would at least have looked benignly on Chris Laurence. 'Your brass-man is a rafting dog – well and good,' says Dewy in *Under The Greenwood Tree*. 'Your reed-man is a dab at stirring ye – well and good. Your drum-man is a rare bowel-shaker – good again. But I don't care who hears me say it, nothing will speak to your heart wi' the sweetness o' the man of strings!' □

THEATRE
Rosalind Carne

Horseplay

Strider, The Story of a Horse
MARK ROZOVSKY *Cottesloe*
The Man of Mode
GEORGE ETHEREGE
Orange Tree, Richmond
Unsuitable For Adults
TERRY JOHNSON *Bush*

A bunch of actors is busy pretending to be horses on the South Bank; it is done surprisingly well. Free of pantomime trimmings or *Equus* masks, the actors cavort and prance in comfortable human attire, whirling their thick tails in their hands. David Toguri is responsible for movement, and this is the production's strongest point – bold, inventive and beautifully individualised, with some fine balletic touches. Foremost among the beasts is Michael Pennington's Strider, the piebald hero of this Tolstoy short story. The modern dramatisation is by Mark Rozovsky, translated and adapted by Peter Tegel and directed here, at a leisurely pace and with his customary vision and clarity, by Michael Bogdanov.

But, while the transposition to the stage is intriguing, it is never wholly engrossing. The problem lies in a conflict of artistic genres. A story on the page leaves ample scope for the imagination, while the visual impact of theatre can actually stultify the imaginative process, especially if the script has the direct, descriptive approach of fiction from a single centre of consciousness. Plays of human conflict revel in rich psychological entanglement, but when drama is honed down to the real and symbolic encounter between man and beast, much of theatre's potential is wasted. The resulting impression in this case is storytelling, touched with astute moralising and embellished with special effects.

Still, the effects are impressive. Chris Dyer's design consists of a clear space of timber floor surrounded by thick posts, and there is powerful use of patterned spectacle throughout. A small band plays the author's programmatic and unmistakably Russian score, and Pennington – still as thin as a reed after his gruelling summer run as Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment* – gives a performance of great range and subtlety.

Predictably, the memorable scenes are the moments of terror, his castration and death. Tied fast with ropes and chains as his human torturer approaches with the cold steel – at this point, the actor's obvious humanity is felt in all its force. We are made to question the nature of ownership, that strange force that can make any living creature the disposable property of another. Without any unnecessary prompting, the lot of the captive horse becomes synonymous with that of the Russian peasant, and of all oppressed people. Strider's constant bewildered fear and questioning is a perpetual unanswered question about the nature of his master's will and, by inference, that of humankind.

I left the Cottesloe feeling faintly inadequate. Huge moral issues had been raised, noble sentiments had been nobly expressed, but my response was downright muted. It was a relief, therefore, the following night, to visit one of my favourite London fringe theatres and luxuriate in the pleasures of brilliant repartee and a well-made play. Etherege's **Man of Mode** (1676) is a fine example of the comedy of manners of the Restoration period, and its timeless appeal is demonstrated with considerable flair in Sam Walters's production, with its casual intimacy and defiantly Eighties wardrobe of startling coloured track-suits and matching leg-warmers.

Seventeenth-century dialogue notwithstanding, the luckless mistresses sound like a pair of Sloane Rangers, while you might encounter the man of mode himself, alias Sir Fopling Flutter, in any garish West End night-spot.

David Timson plays him in a tight-fitting gold space-suit. He manages to be outrageous while avoiding excessive camp, sensitive and senseless and strangely endearing. The rest of the cast work well together as they usually do at this address, between appearances sitting among the audience on the tiny acting space. A versatile wooden box provides the necessary props, dressing table, carriages, closet and so forth; the original music is by Peter Fincham.

For a comedy of manners of our own time, I suggest Terry Johnson's play at the Bush. Laughter here is couched in considerable discomfort; though the piece has undoubted problems, it is an interesting stab at the fraught quality of modern, freewheeling sexual relations. The contemporary urban setting is a new departure for Johnson, who established his reputation with *Insignificance* at the Royal Court in 1982. Here he takes us into the seedy purlieus of showbiz, the alternative comedy circuit with its downbeat humour, scrappy venues and highly neurotic participants – an apt dramatic metaphor for more wide-ranging psychic malaise. Geoff Rose's design is the upstairs room of a pub, and it draws us neatly back into the world we step out of when we climb the stairs from the downstairs bar.

We focus on Kate (Felicity Montagu), a comedian and self-proclaimed feminist, aggressive and confused, but likeable – if only because she is so painfully torn between what she feels and what she thinks she should feel. Her foil is Tish (Joanne Pearce), conventionally attractive, gulping pills and gasping through asthma attacks, her personal dissatisfaction transmuted into chronic ill-health. There's also Nick (Tim McInnerny), Kate's philandering boyfriend and Keith (Saul Jephcott), the magician who hasn't got what it takes, and Harry (Ivor Roberts), the patriarchal publican, an ideal vehicle for unwittingly comic ruminations on the younger generation.

They are all irredeemably self-obsessed, which is one reason they come alive on stage, another being Mike Bradwell's directorial golden touch. There's an exciting mood abroad, as if anything could happen, but there are also stretches which feel strained, like the supposedly comic monologues and the two women's unconvincing semblance of sisterhood at the end. It's a strange play with a fragmentary, almost experimental feel, but, at its best, it rings achingly true. □

FILMS
John Coleman

DePalma ham

Scarface (18)
Empire
The Outrageous Innocence of Luis Buñuel
NFT, 1-29 February
Born in Flames (15)
Screen on the Green
Sudden Impact (18)
general release
Ghost Dance
ICA

When does an act of homage turn into a grab for sympathy? It was that master of the-games-people-play, Stephen Potter, who proposed that Literary Lifemanship's wickedest ploy against hesitant reviewers might be a sapping dedication, something along the lines of 'To My Father – That He Be Restored God's Gift of Sight'. Only last week we had Godard rolling up an envoi to his undernourished *First Name Carmen:* 'In Memoriam Small Pictures'. Now there is Brian DePalma's **Scarface,** all 170 minutes of it, ending on the titled offer 'This film is dedicated to Howard Hawks and Ben Hecht'. And everyone knows that the 1932 Hawks-directed, Hecht-scripted film of the same name is a classic, so that a handful or two of stardust from *that* might conceivably lend historic glitter to the DePalma. This we shall call gilt by association.

As a matter of blunt fact, by which I mean opinion, Hawks's *Scarface* – with Muni

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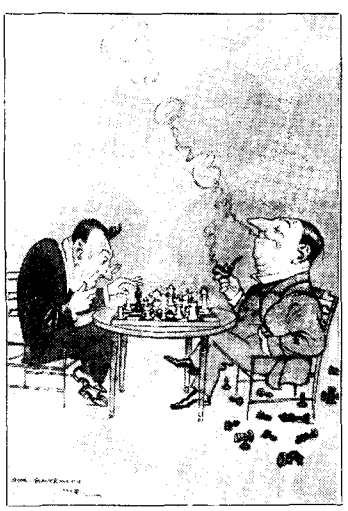

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playing a comic-pathetic version of Al Capone – is something of a freak of a movie, happily gadding along at a mere 90 minutes and making the most of its black-and-white images to set up a sort of tabloid poetry, but nobody's masterwork. At moments, it's downright ludicrous, even for a period piece, with damnable dialogue. Yet it remains a screeching mile ahead of DePalma's updating, which is ludicrous *now* and fairly consistently. Scripted by Oliver Stone, who must have the world's most retentive ear for a cliché, it transfers the rise and fall of a hoodlum from the Chicago Twenties to the Miami Eighties. Muni's Tony Camonte becomes Al Pacino's Tony Montana; a street-corner Italian becomes a Castro-deported Cuban, one of the thousands of jailbird 'Marielitos' wickedly and gratefully off-loaded.

One sees where the parallels lie, albeit slumped. Both Tonies tone down their dress sense a mite as they rise. Both have a Borgian yen for their younger sisters and end up shooting those sisters' husbands. Both acquire the mistresses of their erstwhile bosses. Both are visually mocked by ads declaring 'The World is Yours': Montana's comes on a Pan-Am blimp and, later, on an artefact in the giant hall of his mansion. Camonte relishes his protective steel shutters: Montana spends 12 per cent of his huge loot on security guards and a bank of TV monitors. Figurations of crosses cropped up wholesale in Hawks's film: a case might be made for noughts, or circles, recurring in DePalma's – 360° swoops round the sassy Cuban at immigration, an overhead shot of his great circular bath as he mutters there, soaking, alone. But this way madness beckons.

DePalma's ambitious, big-screen, vulgar-coloured, too long folly sketchily traces the closed world of a cocky young Cuban who has already killed and will kill at will to get money, power, women. He gets what he thought he wanted through a bravado-bravura cutting of corners into the cocaine racket, impressing a Mr Big in Bolivia, picking up a coke habit himself as he acquires the blonde, socialite, fuckyou and coked-mindless sex-and-status doll of his limited dreams. Maybe we are supposed to sag emotionally into the pathos of his limitations, or maybe admire him as a go-getter, as Capone was admired by arseholes as an achiever. What I do know is that a couple of images, as red-eyed Pacino swoops his sniffing nose down into a positive snowdrift of cocaine on his desk and inhales, carry this fluffed (and nasty) enterprise into places humour has never inhabited. A 30-minute TV documentary, reading the dirty news, would be better entertainment.

Buñuel, who really lived and was not notably nice (read the free-associating and utterly anarchic *My Last Breath* by Luis Buñuel, translated by Abigail Israel, Cape £8.95, for further confirmation of this), stirred things up in his time and in ours and our children's; his beady opus is implacably there, for head-on confrontation. Some of it is as ingrown as a horny toe-nail, on a private, personal, arrogant footing; most is eerily accessible, coming from such a master-kook. Watch out, in his NFT season, for the 1951 *Mexican Bus Ride* (10 February) and for the quintessential *The Exterminating Angel* (22 February) or how to throw a party in all directions.

Which takes care, on rapid reflection, of a smudged, play-documentary feminist mess, **Born in Flames,** which projects women reacting via pop music and the media and then guns to an inconceivable governmental revolution in America that leaves them holding the baby, singing the blues. Lizzie Borden didn't so much direct as – she asked for it – take an axe. A weapon better administered to the crass Clint Eastwood *Dirty Harry* Mark IV, **Sudden Impact:** white trash. Ken McMullen's **Ghost Dance** is the inexcusable – surf, voices over, two cemeteries, two pretty girls – rendered insupportable by one of those little Gallic intellectuals *de voyage*, Jacques Derrida, mouthing, smugly. □

ART
John Spurling

For sale

THE FIRST EVER International Contemporary Art Fair in London was held at the Barbican two weeks ago and received harsh criticism from at least two of my colleagues. Their main complaints – that there was too much soft porn and that many of the more reputable galleries had not taken part – were perfectly justified, but too narrowly conceived. They assumed that a contemporary art fair can only be conducted in the existing context of commercial art.

But if such a fair has any purpose at all, it must surely be to broaden the context, to involve a fresh public and, above all, to alter the expectations of the dealers and their artists. Contemporary art – in this country, at least – has worked itself into a hole. Dealers expect to sell only to a few well-heeled collectors (most often foreigners) or to institutions such as the Tate, the Arts Council or the British Council. Artists, with the same expectation, set their prices according to status (what their peer group can command), on the principle that only three or four out of, say, 20 works in a show will be sold. The public, meanwhile, is intimidated not only by the prices and the atmosphere of exclusiveness but by the very idea of contemporary art, which it regards as some sort of sectarian conspiracy against art rather than as the broad church it really is, a welter of conflicting responses both to artistic tradition and the reality of the world. It is sad to see people surrounding themselves with inept naivetés and imitations or fifth-rate antiques, when we have been living for the last 20 or 30 years through one of the most adventurous and exhilarating periods in the history of British art.

Buying contemporary art is, after all, only like buying anything else: shopping around a bit, getting to know which galleries come nearest to your own tastes, paying, if necessary, by instalments (any decent gallery will let you do this without charge and the Arts Council runs a generous instalment scheme at the Serpentine). Possessing contemporary art is the same as possessing books and being possessed by them – and one doesn't have to be a dealer or even an artist to be keen for the habit to spread.

The problem for the newcomer is where to start; it might be answered by a fair which, without descending to the garish level of the Bayswater Road on a Sunday, was down- rather than up-market. There were good works at low prices in the Barbican (for example, Ana Maria Pacheco's etchings on the Retigraphic Society's stand or John Kimpton's small landscapes shown by the Ginnel Gallery from Manchester) as well as good pricey ones, but they were swamped by pretentious, odious and expensive things, park-railing paintings for the plutocrats, as it were. The fault lay essentially in its being an occasion for the trade and the customary customer and it is no doubt too much to hope that the galleries themselves, which obstinately think they know the trade and its limits, might on another occasion (next year's International Fair is to be held at Olympia) try to woo new customers with new artists at new prices. The possibilities need to be explored for them, perhaps by a relatively small summer fair of mainly British works priced at under £500, which could be organised by the Contemporary Art Society or the Arts Council or both and held at the Serpentine.

UNDERNEATH its majestic Duveen Galleries, all set about with the Mercouri Marbles, the BM has a series of basements. With money provided by the Wolfson Foundation it has been busy converting these into new galleries for its vast holding of less controversial Greek and Roman sculptures. Three galleries are to be opened next year, but the other four, chiefly devoted to Roman sculptures collected by Charles Townley, opened last month. Townley bought most of the pieces in Rome, starting in the very year, 1768, that Winckelmann, the great art historian of the 18th-century classical revival, was murdered in a Trieste hotel. After Townley's own death in 1805, the collection was eagerly acquired for the BM, only to be consigned to comparative obscurity soon afterwards by the acquisition of the always publicity-stealing Mercouris.

You enter the main room down a corridor lined on either side with double rows of solemn portrait heads – gods, heroes, emperors, philosophers, tragedians and citizens – and emerge into a hectic concourse of figures: nymphs fending off satyrs, wine gods bibbing, dogs and cupids at play, Venus posing, the Discobolus winding himself into a twist. Most striking of all is the so-called 'Cannibal', a boy apparently munching a human arm, but more soberly identified by Winckelmann as the remaining half of a pair of quarrelling knuckle-bone players, whose opponent has vanished leaving only his arm in the other's teeth. It's an oddly contemporary example of how an image can be transformed by time, chance

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and the mind of the beholder from the homely to the grisly to the formal and art-historical.

The art world's brief moratorium on its classical tradition makes all these sculptures seem splendidly fresh again and the place will surely be a mecca for those contemporary artists who have just rediscovered in themselves Winckelmann's and Townley's romantic passion for the classical antique. Some of them could be spotted at the Barbican among the soft porn and corn and two have solo exhibitions in London at the moment: Hugh Davies at Redfern in Cork Street and Kevin O'Brien at the New Art Centre in Sloane Street. □

TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

Purgatory

I WAS TRYING to watch **All The World's A Stage** (BBC-2), a 13-part history of '2000 years of drama', when my TV set started having trouble with its plug, which was spluttering to itself like a judge and letting off blue sparks. The set was soon flashing on and off with a popping noise like the ones between the advertisements. Finally the gaps in the current increased to a point where the telly thought it was being switched off, and when it came back on again it was on BBC-1: something called **Ever Decreasing Circles**, which I watched for a while without realising the difference. I brought the programme in to land on manual and switched off. Peace and safety made a rare visit to this TV ash-pit.

If only this accidental hiatus could be extended indefinitely! Or long enough to give us all a winter break from the lava-flow of coloured particles that has a way of wheedling itself into our homes as if we all kept open house to any form of weirdness that happened to be passing and fancied dropping in. (Which, of course, we do.) I have changed only two words in the following prose translation of a poem:

> When the low, leaden television programme weighs like a lid on the groaning mind tortured by long-felt cares, and when, embracing the whole ring of the horizon, it pours on us dark day which is sadder than any night; when the earth is turned into a dripping prison cell in which Hope, bat-like, goes brushing its timid wing against the walls and knocking its head against the rotted ceilings; when the whole picture, fanning out its long streaks, imitates the bars of an enormous gaol, and a silent horde of loathsome spiders come and weave their webs inside our brains, then suddenly bells ring angrily and hurl their horrible howl into the sky, like wandering homeless spirits beginning their relentless wailing. And long hearses, with neither drums nor music, move slowly in procession through my soul, and defeated Hope bursts into tears, and the beastly tyrant, Anguish, sets his black flag on my bowed head. (*Spleen*, Baudelaire.)

Television reminds me of America. It is all front and no back and there's too much of it all round for it to be called one thing. It's not so much its lack of vertical hold that is irksome as its excess of horizontal spread – a puppy-fat problem, psychological as much as dietary or glandular, which is going to be exacerbated by the two multi-part Histories of Television presently on their way to our screens, one from Auntie and the other from Grandada. I hope they are one-man shows.

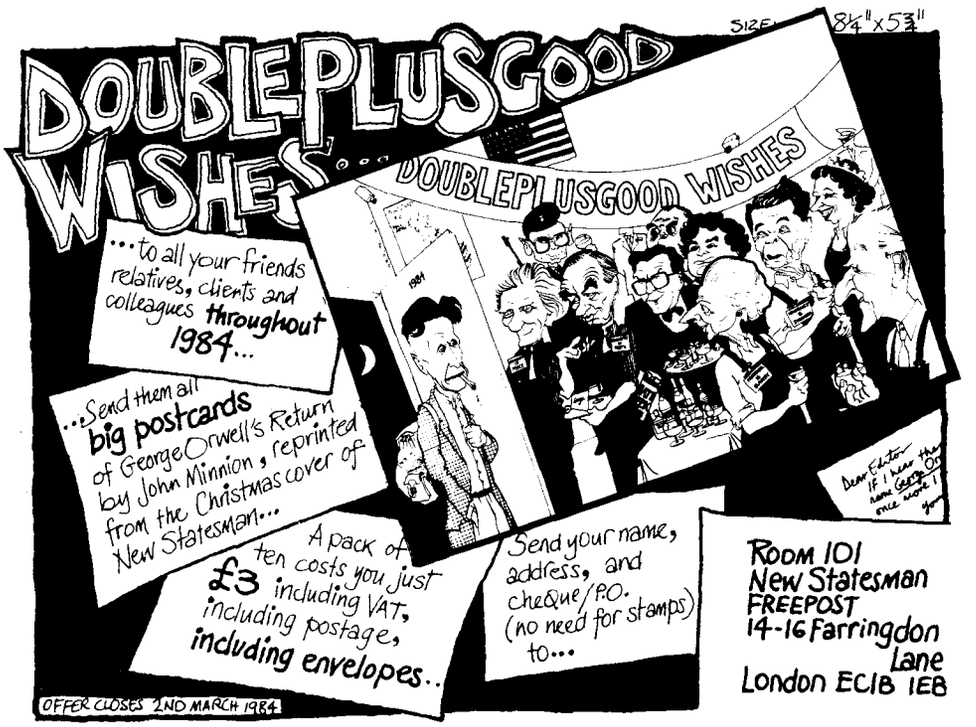
The first instalment of *All The World's A Stage* didn't bode well for the genre. Ronald Harwood, the show's presenter, is, as he kept telling us, a playwright and a very successful one: Broadway, film rights and money. 'This is my home where I wrote the play,' he told us, as we tip-toed up to his superb 13-part Regency manor set in woods and slid indoors to envy his luxurious book-lined study. You mean the play actually touched this writing table, Ronald? Impossible! I was just expecting Lloyd Grossman to appear and start making cutting remarks about the owner's potty training when I remembered that this was a 13-part history of the theatre and wondered if it was to be set entirely in Harwood's plush homestead.

As it turned out, his house was more articulate than his commentary. 'It's clear that the drama is *needed*', he told us. 'For some reason people *need* to experience the drama. At some times more than at others. Playwrights dramatise the pain and pleasure of *existence*. Our *need* for *drama* in our *lives*. Actors must entice the audience into an imagined world.' If you are someone who finds it fascinating to hear self-evident facts being translated into abstract truisms (and some do) this series will grip you like a vice. I'm not. I'm so clever I know instinctively that 'Masks conceal the identity of an actor'. I can even guess that 'Impersonation is at the heart of the theatre'. And I have always been sure that 'People have to create something that actually *works* in a theatre.'

The show became slightly more vivid when it got round to a subject more congenial to its heart, the first night of Harwood's play on Broadway, extended extracts from which dominated the programme. We saw a backstage deathscene infected with much the same literal-mindedness its author had exhibited in his theorising, but put across in the style of the play's inspiration, the thunderous Donald Wolfit, whose dresser Harwood used to be. Everyone in the cast seemed to be acting in the same force-10 style for which Wolfit was so feared in his lifetime. When the curtain came down we followed a glowing Harwood to the real backstage for kissing and champagne. 'Since the time is so short until the notices come out, the tradition is to spend it at a party,' he told us. 'Sometimes you find yourself drinking alone: people have heard about the notices and crept off.' No such luck here. As the grisly, adrenalin-fuelled back-slapping progressed towards dawn and the inevitable raves, I couldn't help thinking that a flop would have made better snooping.

But this was unkind. The play took its chances and was a hit. That's something TV doesn't have to do. When a play fails on the stage, it is taken off and the theatre goes dark for a week or two. This can't happen on telly. No matter how inaccurate and babyish the programme (c.f. *The Thorn Birds*) our screens remain shiny-bright, as if they were protected by Colgate's famous 'ring of confidence' (as, in fact, they are), absolved from the laws of success and failure the rest of the world has to live by. There is no escaping their gleam.

Among the truisms hoisted aloft by Harwood was this: 'The magic is made between the audience on the one hand and the actors on the other.' This can't happen on TV. Despite gigantic viewing figures the audience isn't really there at all, until the telephone rings from the ratings people. They are in limbo-land, between the living and the dead, in a place otherwise known as Purgatory. □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No 2804 Set by Maud Gracechurch

Small ads to assist the sale of national assets.

Report By Ms de Meaner

What a week! Incompetence within and whining without. It has been brought to my attention that the fact-checking department got at Mr Pearse's entry last week *after* it had been through rhyme and rhythm quality control. Result: an over-zealous seeker after accuracy-at-all-costs changed '*blades* of a silver-fox trap' to '*teeth* of ditto', thus ruining – or at least mildly vitiating – Mr Pearse's internal rhyme scheme. Mr Pearse should know by now that the Complex does not look benignly upon complaint, however apparently justified. Since, however, he made a big effort and refrained from comment about a misspelling of his name, we shall overlook his temerity on this occasion.

Re-education classes of the strictest kind have been instituted after hours in the subs' room, since they also managed to let through a substitution of 'Kent' for 'Brent' in Mr Murray's little verse. As he nigglingly points out, he can't have his comrades thinking he doesn't understand the local government boundaries. Mr Murray does not win this week. Those who do get two Newtons per OK-ish small ad.

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FIRST PERSON

Jeremy Lewis

Death as a party

EVER SINCE I CAN remember, I have spent a fair amount of my free time worrying about my death: not, for the most part, in a morbid or even a religious sense, but from a purely social point of view. What I fear above all else is an inconvenient or conspicuous departure, exciting frowns of irritation or an uneasy embarrassment among the assembled company.

How I dread ruining an evening at the theatre by gasping my last shortly before the interval, only to be discovered slumped in my seat as my companions hurry towards the bar for a well-earned drink; or being overcome in my regular commuter train, alarming my fellow travellers by the sudden flailing of my arms and causing a brief lowering of newspapers as my remains – large and stiff at the best of times – are awkwardly manhandled off the train.

Such tribulations behind me, I look forward to reporting for duty 'aloft' – in the words of William Plomer, that wittiest and most undervalued of 20th-century poets – 'in Heavenly Mansions, W.1'; always assuming, that is, that my papers are in order and that I have amassed the necessary qualifications here below. Apart from those with a professional or painful interest in the matter – priests, the bereaved, tappers of tables and advocates of ectoplasm – few of us, I suspect, devote as much thought as we should to the nuts and bolts of life in the afterworld. Only the golfing set approaches eternity in a mood of confident anticipation. Firm in their faith that Paradise is an extension of Gleneagles or St George's in Sandwich, they dream of teeing off with old friends within minutes of arrival, then reminiscing over large gin-and-tonics in the celestial clubhouse.

Untempted by such prospects and unconvinced by clouds or harp-playing angels, I find it hard not to think of heaven – in the early stages, at least – as a vast and overnoisy cocktail party, with old pals braying excitedly at one another, debtors slipping silently away as their creditors hove into view, the shy or the lonely standing sheepishly in corners before being rescued by kindly guardian angels (smiling, decent folk; none too bright, but with hearts of gold, like Butlin's Redcoats with wings) and forcibly introduced to a tight little group that would far sooner *not* be disturbed, and the socially ambitious flashing eager glances over the shoulders of those they're talking to in the hope of catching the eye of Socrates or Attila the Hun.

Every now and then – or so I like to think – the screech of brakes and the slamming of doors heralds a coachload of new arrivals and a ripple of anticipation runs through the assembled company. The newcomers stand blinking in the doorway, the ladies clutching outsize white handbags of the kind invariably carried by ladies in coaches, the men looking ill-at-ease in their Sunday suits; yet, within minutes, they have recognised familiar faces and, drink in hand, are chatting eagerly away, remembering the good old days and roaring afresh at the jokes they enjoyed below. Loved Ones are loved anew, interesting acquaintances are struck up and a unique opportunity is offered to rub shoulders with the famous, from Frederick Barbarossa to Sir Stafford Cripps.

What worries me, though, is the prospect of Eternity. Memory Lane extends only so far; before long, conversation may begin to run out, leaving the residents gazing uncomfortably at one another, shifting from foot to foot as they struggle for things to say. Tempers could begin to fray as the dubiously tweeded 'major' – still remembered in Merton and Morden for his powers as a double-glazing salesman – tells that joke just once too often at the bar of The Pearly Gates, or the tedious ex-neighbour insists on giving a blow-by-blow account of the food poisoning they endured on the Costa, ruinously interrupting the pleasurable quarter-century you've set aside for the complete works of Balzac and Dumas *père et fils*.

While on the subject of literature: much as I look forward to re-reading Smollett and Surtees, the most avid bookworm may blench at the prospect of working his way through the entire canon of world literature in the original languages for the third time, while a specially screened re-run of the history of the universe will only occupy eternity's equivalent of an afternoon. And even the pleasures of Eternal Rest bring with them the hazards of Eternal Backache.

Missing from all this, of course, is Mine Host. Since He remains, alas, as elusive and incognito as ever, it's probably safe to assume that what He has in mind for us (if anything) will be considerably more surprising than my version of events. With which inconclusive speculation, I return you safely to earth. □

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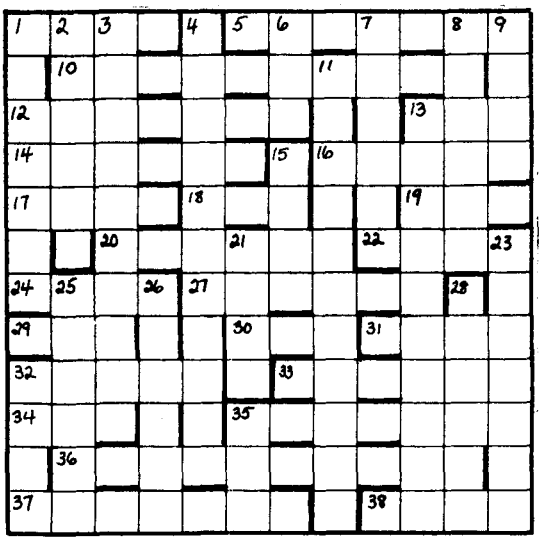
'Give us a clue'

PRIZES: £25 cheques for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 78, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 28 February.



The merely categorised answers (along with 21) may be regarded as effectively unclued, and solvers can check their answers with Whitaker and/or A DEPT. OF 1926-59. (This is for the WBS.)

Name_____

Address_____

_____

_____

ACROSS

1 Sounds like a stopper – soft white rock (4)
5 Book & painting – following standard stew (7)
10 Book & film
12 See 28
13 Book (Herbert's), 2nd word – obscure, producing bewilderment (3)
14 Lead with energy contained in little bottle (6)
16 Sounds like ditches, lots of them (5)
17 Notice a fellow would echo (4)
18 Book, first word – sounds like just the bird for one with an impediment (3)
19 Sounds like song given by character of a chap (3)
20 Two words: – Increase the power of money, young man (6)
22 To get this it takes about, about ages and ages! (4)
24 Book & film
27 Sounds like a gang in pile up (6)
29 Book (McBain's) – One's showing ten instead of a hundred in cut down (3)
30 See 13D
31 Two words: – Something of plain reason concerning Romans (4)
32 Something that blooms with a certain currency in France (5)
33 For 'to take away oars' his pun is crafty (6)
34 Song: – manner of exposure (3)
35 Book – 'The Sod', specially put together for plant-growers (7)
36 'Walruses & Seals' – I nipped in cleverly with first answer (10)
37 Book, 2nd word – sad help provided in furnishing room for brain, say? (7)
38 Mythical youth always keeping time with society (4)

DOWN

1 Book & film
2 Two words: – Down this one's permitted to rise taking in a fellow that's slovenly (6)
3 You'll see heroes were made good no matter what the place (10)
4 Book & film
6 Spear one needs silence to appreciate (3)
7 Book (Ronay's), English – get away with you! (6)
8 Feast – this I do as one tucking in madly (6)
9 Book – first shown to insensitive types (4)
11 As sort of transmitter awkwardly interpret wing when described (11)
13, 30 Book & film
15 Perform, you see, sounding like a monkey (4)
21 Radio (Copper – one out of fifty?)
23 Doubt the first sign could be Pisces (7)
25 Flowers of the field lacking height – Phlox is wrong (6)
26 Lizard (you'll find it in agua perhaps) (6)
28, 12 Book & film
32 Book (Camus'), 2nd word – Cry given when whale's seen to become involved with trap (4)
35 Sounds like advanced, in hurry, losing dead skin (3)

Solution to Salamanca 77

F	I	S	H	E	R	M	A	N	I	C	H
I	N	C	A	S	E	A	B	O	R	L	E
P	L	U	N	D	E	R	O	U	S	O	R
Y	A	L	D	E	F	Y	A	P	I	S	M
T	Y	P	I	F	Y	B	R	I	B	E	O
H	E	Y	L	Y	A	U	D	D	I	C	T
A	R	M	Y	K	I	D	S	O	T	A	I
G	P	A	Y	E	R	D	I	S	A	R	M
O	R	I	Y	A	S	N	L	S	R	D	U
R	O	A	E	T	H	E	L	I	D	E	S
A	L	O	D	S	I	S	L	E	E	C	H
S	E	G	E	U	P	H	O	R	B	U	S

The unclued answers are the previous (according to him) incarnations of Pythagoras, whose letter, Y, forms a Y-shaped motif in the grid.

Prizewinners to Salamanca 77

M. Drew (Peppard Common, Oxon.)
Bryn Glover (Leeds)
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For job description and application form please contact: Ashy, Jeanette John, 14 Baylis Road, London SE1. Tel: 01-261 1404

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LISTINGS

FRI 3 FEBRUARY

SCOTLAND Inaugural Meeting, Midlothian Fed. of CND grps. Spkrs. Alex Eadie MP, Roland Boyes, MP. 7.30pm Woodburn Community Centre, Dalkeith. **Org. Labour Party.**

MANCHESTER 'Health Cuts and Privatisation' Spkrs. Gerald Kaufman MP, Michael Meacher MP. 7.30pm Longsight Library, Stockport Rd. **Org. Labour Party.**

LONDON Jon Blair, co-author of *The Biko Inquest* (starts 2 Feb) will talk about how the play came into being. 6.30pm Adm. free. Riverside Studios, Crisp Rd, Hammersmith, W6. **01-748 3354.**

LONDON 'Is Kadar's Hungary an Alternative?' – seminar presented by Mihaly Vajda, leading Hungarian Socialist critic. 6pm Polytechnic of Central London, 309 Regent St, W1. Sponsors: PCL, School of Slavonic and E. European Studies and LSE. **Details: 01-482 0404.**

OXFORD Public Meeting to launch the History Workshop Centre for Social History. Spkrs Christopher Hill, Raphael Samuel, Carolyn Steedman, Olwen Hufton, Tim Mason. 7.30-9.30pm Buxton Hall, Ruskin College. **Details: 0865 56041/53824/240294.**

SAT 4 FEBRUARY

LONDON 'The Politics and Technology or possible Catastrophe' (2 linked Saturday schools – next 11 Feb) Fee: 2 days £9/£4 unwaged; 1 day £5/£2 unwaged. 10am 26 Russell Sq, WC1. **Details: Dept. Extra-Mural Studies, Univ. of London 01-636 8000 x 3850**

NOTTINGHAM Rate Capping – Spkrs. incl. John Cunningham MP. David Blunkett 12.30pm Adm. 50p. Victoria Hotel, Consort Suite, Milton St. **Org. Fabian Society.**

BIRMINGHAM CND-NVDA workshop 2-5pm Bishop Challoner Sch. Institute Rd, Kings Heath. All welcome. **Org. W. Midlands CND**

NOTTINGHAM 'Housing Benefit – a socialist response' 6pm Royal Hotel. Org. Labour Social Security Campaign. **Details: 714970.**

LONDON 'Chinese women since Mao' – seminar/discn. Spkrs Elisabeth Croll and Sheila Hillier on 'Chinese Women and Health' (Illustrated), Penny Cane 'The One Child Family'. Adm free. 2pm St Pancras Church Hall, Lancing St, NW1. **Org. Zed Books/SACU. Details: 01-837 4014/0384.**

LONDON A reading of Kafka's 'The Trial' in aid of International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, introduced by Czech writer: Zdena Tomin. 4pm Riverside Theatre Studio. Tickets: £2.

SUN 5 FEBRUARY

LONDON Benefit perf. for Greenham Common: Gay Sweatshop presents 'Poppies' by Noel Greig. Tickets £3. 8pm **Tricycle Theatre, 269 Kilburn High Rd, NW6 01-328 8628.**

MON 6 FEBRUARY

LONDON Readings from 'Woman at Point Zero' by Nawal El Saadawi in English and Arabic. 6.30pm Commonwealth Inst, Kensington High Street. Adm. free. Drink/food. **Details: Soma Books 01-603 0754.**

LONDON History Workshop seminar: Tariq Ali 'India in English fiction'. 7.30pm upstairs The Wheatsheaf, Rathbone Pl, W1.

TUES 7 FEBRUARY

GLASGOW 'Crime and Punishment' – an anarchist response to the sanctions of the State. Adm. free. 7.30pm Langside Halls (off Pollokshaws Rd). **Details: Glasgow Bookshop Collective, 488 Gt. Western Rd, G12. 01-330 8218.**

WANDSWORTH 'The Therapeutic Community – within and beyond the hospital boundary' – workshop led by representatives of The Henderson Hospital. 7.30pm Penfold Centre (off Buckhold Rd), 1 Neville Gill Clo, SW18. All welcome, adm. free, tea/coffee, collection. **Details: WAMH, 3 Brodrick Rd, SW17.**

LONDON 'Tiger Bay is my home' history of black struggle in Cardiff. First of series of documentary films by Colin Prescod on black struggles against racism in UK. 7pm Inst. Race Relations, 247 Pentonville Rd, N1. **Details: 01-837 0041.**

LONDON Seminar on the Practical Implications of Equal Treatment Regulations. 9.30-1pm Friends House, Euston Rd, NW1. Course fee £10. **Details: Alan Booth, CPAG, 1 Macklin St, WC2. 01-242 3225.**

WED 8 FEBRUARY

LONDON 'Protecting the deprived minority' Neil McIntosh, Director, Shelter 6.30pm St. James's Church, Piccadilly, W1. **Org. Dunamis.**

LONDON 'The Fight for Peace' spkrs from Greenham Common. 7.30pm Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton SW2. Adm. 30p. **Org. S. London Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! BM Box 4836, WC1V 3XX.**

LONDON 'Women and Mental Health' – second open planning meeting. 7pm 'A Womens Place', Victoria Embankment, SW1. Women only, access for disabled but ring **AWP for details on 01-836 6081.**

LONDON 'Zimbabwe's Economic Performance in 1983 and prospects for '84'. Spkr. Roger Riddell, former Chief Economist, Confed. of Zimbabwe Industries. 1.15pm Africa Centre, 38 King St, WC2. **Org. Britain-Zimbabwe Soc.**

THURS 9 FEBRUARY

LONDON 1984 Discourses of Utopia 2-day Conf. 9.30-5.30 Whitelands College, West Hill, SW15. Fee £1/unwaged free. **Details: English Dept, Roehampton Inst. 01-946 2234.**

FRI 10 FEBRUARY

LONDON Gay Humanist Group Open Meeting. Spkr Maureen Duffy on E. M. Forster. 7.30pm The Library, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1. **GHG, 34 Spring La, Kenilworth, CV8 2HB. 0026 58450.**

LONDON Fundraising Party for Campaign for Press & Broadcasting Freedom. Disco, bar to 1am, buffet. £5. 8.30pm Ludgate Cellars, Apothecary St, EC4. **Write for tickets: CPBF, 9 Poland St, W1.**

SAT 11 FEBRUARY

BRISTOL 'Has the Co-op Movement a Future?' Spkrs: Alan Taylor, Ivy Wood, Norman Stevens. Adm. £1. 'White Hart', Brislington Hill. **Details: Nat. Fed. of Progressive Co-operators, 28 Cromer Villa Rd, SW18.**

MANCHESTER Anti-Trident Convention Free Trade Hall. Fee £3/£1 visitors. **Details and leaflets Anti-Trident Campaign, 420 Sauchiehall St, Glasgow. 041-332 3141.**

FORTHCOMING

14 FEB MANCHESTER 'Whistleblowers – what happens to scientists whose opinions don't fit their bosses' policies?' 7.30pm Polytechnic Students Union, Sidney St (off Oxford Rd). **Details: British Society for Social Responsibility in Science, 9 Poland St, London, W1.**

17-18 FEB MANCHESTER Alternative jobs Fair, UMIST Union. Exhibitions, displays, spkrs. Adm. free. **Details: Pete Abel 061-236 9114 x 27.**

18 FEB LONDON Benefit for E. London Troops Out Movement. Live Irish music, floor singers, bar, food. Adm. £1.50/£1 unwaged. 8pm Hackney Trades Club, 96 Dalston La, E8. **Org: TOM, Box 13 136 Kingsland High St, E8.**

23 FEB LONDON 1984 and Human Rights. Spkr Prof Theo van Boven, to 1982 Director UN Div. of Human Rights. Adm. free. 6pm Chatham House, 10 St. James Sq, SW1. **Org. MRG 01-930 6659.**

23 FEB DUDLEY 'The Forward Face of Feminism' Public discn. with Tricia Davis of Communist Party. 7.30pm The Swan, Castle St.

25 FEB MANCHESTER Anti-Trident Convention in Free Trade Hall. 11 am-5 pm. Spkrs, workshops, videos, displays. **Details: Anti-Trident Campaign, 420 Sauchiehall St, Glasgow G2. 041-332 3141.**

9 MARCH 1984 International Women's Day delegation to Armagh Prison, N. Ireland. (return Mon. 12 Mar). Picket prison 11 Mar. Approx. cost £45. Accommo provided in Belfast. **Details: London Armagh Co-ord. grp. 374 Gray's Inn Rd, WC1. Maggie: 01-289 3878 (day)**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad. under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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GROUPS/MEETINGS

NEIL KINNOCK IN LONDON RALLY

Central Hall, Westminster
London SW1

TUESDAY, 7 FEB.

7.30 pm

with

KEN LIVINGSTONE, RODNEY BICKERSTAFFE
JO RICHARDSON MP

Tickets 50p, 20p unwaged from
The Greater London Labour Party
195 Walworth Road, London SE17
Telephone: 01-703 6511 or AT THE DOOR

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Public Talk Sunday, 5 February, 8 p.m. 'The Mystery of Dreams'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

THE UNIVERSE doesn't stop at the Kingdom of Nature (Human). Course 'Alice Bailey': 24-26 Feb. Medhope, Tintern, Gwent. 029 18 253.

FOR INTELLECTUAL Stimulation, Physical Recreation, Friendly Companionship telephone Progressive League 01-452 8358.

GAY SOCIALIST? Isolated from others like you? Icebreakers is a group of socialist gay men, committed to progressive sexual politics and offering support and friendship to others like them, through meetings and our helpline. Ring us on 01-274 9590, Monday to Friday 7.30-10.30 p.m.

RACE GENDER AND CLASS

International Conference
16, 17, 18 April
at Brighton Polytechnic

Tariq Ali, *Socialist Society, London* ● **Michele Barrett**, *City University, London* ● **Veronica Beechey**, *Open University, Milton Keynes* ● **Tony Bunyan**, *State Research, London* ● **Hazel Carby**, *Wesleyan University, Connecticut, USA* ● **Zilla Eisenstein**, *Ithaca College, New York, USA* ● **Stephen Fenchtwang**, *City University, London* ● **Paul Gilroy**, *GLC, London* ● **Cora Kaplan** *University Sussex* ● **Norman Levy**, *Middlesex Poly, London* ● **Joan McFarland**, *St Thomas University, Fredericton, Canada* ● **Swasti Mitter**, *Brighton Poly* ● **Angela McRobbie**, *St Martin's School of Art, London* ● **Mary O'Brien**, *OISE, Toronto, Canada* ● **Wally Seccombe**, *OISE* ● **Ann-Marie Wolpe**, *Middlesex Poly, Enfield*

Conference fee, accom. and full board £75

Conference fee only £40

Lunch, tea and coffee daily £4.15 per day

Bookings now accepted to: Mike Cole (Room B13), A Block, Brighton Polytechnic, Falmer BN1 9PH (Tel. 0273 606622)

LABOUR CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

CONFERENCE

Saturday, 18 February
11 a.m.-5 p.m.

FIGHTING THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

County Hall, London SE1

Robin Cook MP, with European Socialist speakers. Sponsored by **Richard Balfe, Roland Boyes, Anne Clwyd and the European Parliament Socialist Group**

Registration: LCC, 9 Poland Street, London W1

£3 waged, £1 unwaged

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In the Name of God
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of IRAN
27 Princes Gate, London SW7

Inauguration and display of an exhibition on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution in IRAN

A display of pictures, posters and films followed by speeches to celebrate the start of the sixth year after the glorious victory of the Islamic Revolution in IRAN

Time: Bahman 12-22 (the 10-day period of Fajr)
February 1-11, 1984, daily from 4 to 7pm

Place: The Islamic Universal Association
20 Penzance Place, Holland Park, W.11

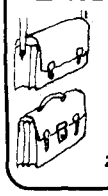
Nearest Tube Station: Holland Park.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: The Ethel M. Wood Memorial Lecture will be given by Professor Morna D. Hooker (The Lady Margaret's Professor, University of Cambridge) entitled: 'New Wine in Old Bottles: A Discussion of Continuity and Discontinuity in Relation to Judaism and the Gospel' at the University of London, Senate House (Chancellor's Hall), Malet Street, London WC1 at 5.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 14 February 1984.

FOR SALE

PINE KITCHEN TABLE. Victorian, large cutlery drawer. Lovingly hand-stripped, waxed. Very reluctant sale. Scrubbed top, turned legs. £120 ono. 01-720 9902.

BRIEFCASES



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ACADEMIC, LITERARY type with country cottage, 40, tall, slim, divorced, seeks attractive cultured lady for friendship plus. Children welcome. Box 7420.

ACTIVE LADY, early fifties, divorced, marooned West Midlands. Would lively-minded, unattached male, risk dinner/drink, to see if any degree of compatibility emerges? Box 7510.

AN EXPERIENCED, successful and creative man, with a wide range of talents, is looking for an eccentric, outrageous or just interesting woman/girl, with whom to have an untidy duologue (not necessarily sexual). No whimpering academics please. Box 7485.

ATTRACTIVE, SOUTH American female, 27, London University graduate, seeks well-educated, reliable Englishman, 28-40, for close relationship, possible marriage. Photo, phone appreciated. Box 7472.

ATTRACTIVE, LIVELY widow, 53, seeks unattached caring, humorous, non-stuffy professional man, living London or Kent, for friendship. Tallish, preferably non-smoker. Interests include: theatre, travel, dining-out, social bridge. Box 7470.

ATTRACTIVE, INTELLIGENT, London guy, 28, would like to meet slim, thoughtful female, 18-35. Phone appreciated. Box 7518.

ATTRACTIVE, WARM, professional woman (45), divorced, Jewish, seeks caring, sensitive, tallish man, interested in arts, for friendship and outings, preferably London. Box 7514.

ATTRACTIVE, WARM, Continental woman, divorced, enjoys music, books, films, travel, home-life, seeks outgoing, professional man, 40-60, for lasting, caring relationship. London/Surrey/Kent. Box 7513.

AWARD-WINNING Author (50), unattached, seeks adventurous, non-puritan female companion (30-46), London-based. Photo and phone number appreciated. Box 7467.

BACHELOR PAUL, 39, 6ft tall, with blue eyes, dark hair, left anarchist outlook, would like to meet lady interested in theatre, concerts, travel etc. Box 7507.

CARING, CREATIVE woman, div., attractive, 36, with Arts degrees, children, London home, love of theatre, literature, countryside, travel, seeks caring, positive, intelligent, sincere humorous male partner. 40s/50s. Box 7493.

CONTINENTAL MAN (50s), recently landed near Kingston, searching for very attractive, positive thinking, professional lady. Hopefully apart from listening to discs, she is intent building stable relationship. Box 7515.

EARLY-RETIRED, fully-active, well-heeled, well-wheeled, Cambridge don seeks attractive, unencumbered lady companion, for enjoyable disposal surplus assets, thereby ultimately thwarting taxman. Box 7469.

EXTREMELY QUIET, gentle, impecunious scholar, 48, seeks quiet, small partially furnished flat, anywhere; perhaps in exchange for caretaking, friendship etc. Write 13 Morland Avenue, Leicester.

DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details: Dateline Computer Dating Dept. (NT), 23 Abingdon Rd, London W8. Tel. 01 938 1011.

EX-ACADEMIC male needs more shelfspace (drama, music, opera, food and wine, public administration, politics, travel), and to explore literary landscapes (Wessex, Pennines, Lakes, Manchester in 1845, boulevard Richard Lenoir), with unshelved female. Box 7491.

FEMALE, ATTRACTIVE, warm, outgoing, academic, early forties, seeks liberated male, for sincere friendship. Prefer within reasonable distance Bedfordshire. Box 7492.

GRADUATE, MALE, of Sikh origin, 29, seeks female of liberal/left persuasion, able to appreciate intricacies of Indian and British culture, with view to permanent relationship. Box 7511.

HUMOROUS, SANE male, 41, into politics, films, music, feminism, countryside, wishes to meet like-minded woman, Merseyside/Manchester, for companionship. Box 7468.

INDIAN FROM Trinidad, 40, single, professional, residing NW London, seeks genuine, attractive ladyfriend, with nice figure, modern outlook. Under 35, 5ft 4in upwards. Interested travelling/current affairs. Box 7475.

INTELLIGENT, UNDOMESTICATED widow, late 60s, offers self-contained, furnished flat to retired professional/businessman. Non-smoker essential. Large sitting-room would take desk and some books. Lovely garden with swimming pool. Return for cooking simple meals at weekends and helping look after dog and two cats. Delightful countryside South/West/Midlands. Intellectual interests. Companionship only. Box 7385.

LIVELY, INTELLIGENT, good-looking female, seeks male (50ish), who wants to share enjoyment of life. Professional man needing affection and feminine company would be ideal counter-part. Interests include music, painting, theatre and cooking. Box 7488.

LOVING, THOUGHTFUL and rather cuddly woman, 39, caring professional, Nottingham. Interests: theatre, music, travel, countryside, sharing and listening, pancakes etc. Seeks lovable man. Box 7483.

MAN (35), warm, affectionate, caring, sensual, fairly attractive, would like to meet woman (25-45), for an informal (but discreet) relationship, and sensual fun. Inner or S. London. Telephone number, photo please. Box 7465.

MID-EUROPEAN lady doctor, young looking, late thirties, single, working in London. Has cultural pursuits and enjoys tennis, swimming and skiing. Would like to settle down to family life and to care for a reliable affectionate man who looks for equal commitments. Must be unattached. Spontaneity, candour, ambition and courage appreciated. Box 7476.

ONLY CONNECT. Intelligent, creative man, early 30s, left-liberal views, interested in literature, film, theatre, seeks kind, compatible woman, with sense of independence and humour. Box 7489.

PASSIONATE BUT amusing lover wanted by attractive female, 35, bored with stolidity of Cambridge. Tall, witty, wine-drinker preferred. Must not be possessive. Box 7508.

PETITE, SLIM, semi-retired widow, attractive, young outlook, full of joys of life, wide interests, enterprising, wishes to meet cultured man, 60s onwards, for companionship, shared leisure and interests. Sense of humour essential. North West or Central London preferable. Box 7474.

PRETTY, VERY intelligent, Jewish woman, 46, would like an introspective, talkative, home-loving man, to cherish and be loved by (time, place and date of birth appreciated). Box 7490.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, retired, seeks well educated companion, sense of humour, interested in sunbathing and swimming, for holiday abroad. Share expenses. Box 7471.

SINGLE GENTLEMAN, 31, graduate, presently unemployed and living in Central Scotland, seeks attractive, easy-going lady, for outings and possible relationship if compatible. Box 7509.

UNIVERSITY LECTURER, Glasgow-based, Ph.D, 30, stimulating company, kind, understanding and youthful, needs a lady for meaningful relationship, perhaps marriage. Box 7481.

VIRTUE SELF-REWARDING? Codswallop! Late learner still aspires rewarding alternative. He's unselfrighteous Guruvintage, nevertheless still cheeky. Anxious bestow assets Hi/O damsel. Box 7263.

WEST MIDLANDS male graduate, 25, is hoping to develop rewarding physical relationship with responsive, intelligent female. Race/age unimportant. Can you help? Box 7506.

WOMAN 'd'un certain (50) age', widow, teacher, interested arts, wants to meet man (similar age, tastes) to enjoy life. Write fully, photo appreciated. Box 7482.

YOUNG LOOKING, athletic, professional male, quiet, sensitive, romantic, 54, interests music, theatre, arts, countryside, swimming, seeks cultured, warm, unselfish, sympathetic lady, under 45, caring relationship. London. Box 7473.

YOUNG (MARRIED?) woman sought by male (32), pen-friendship initially. Meetings and semi-platonic relationship (cuddling!) later, if circumstances allow. Discretion assured. Photo appreciated. Box 7466.

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